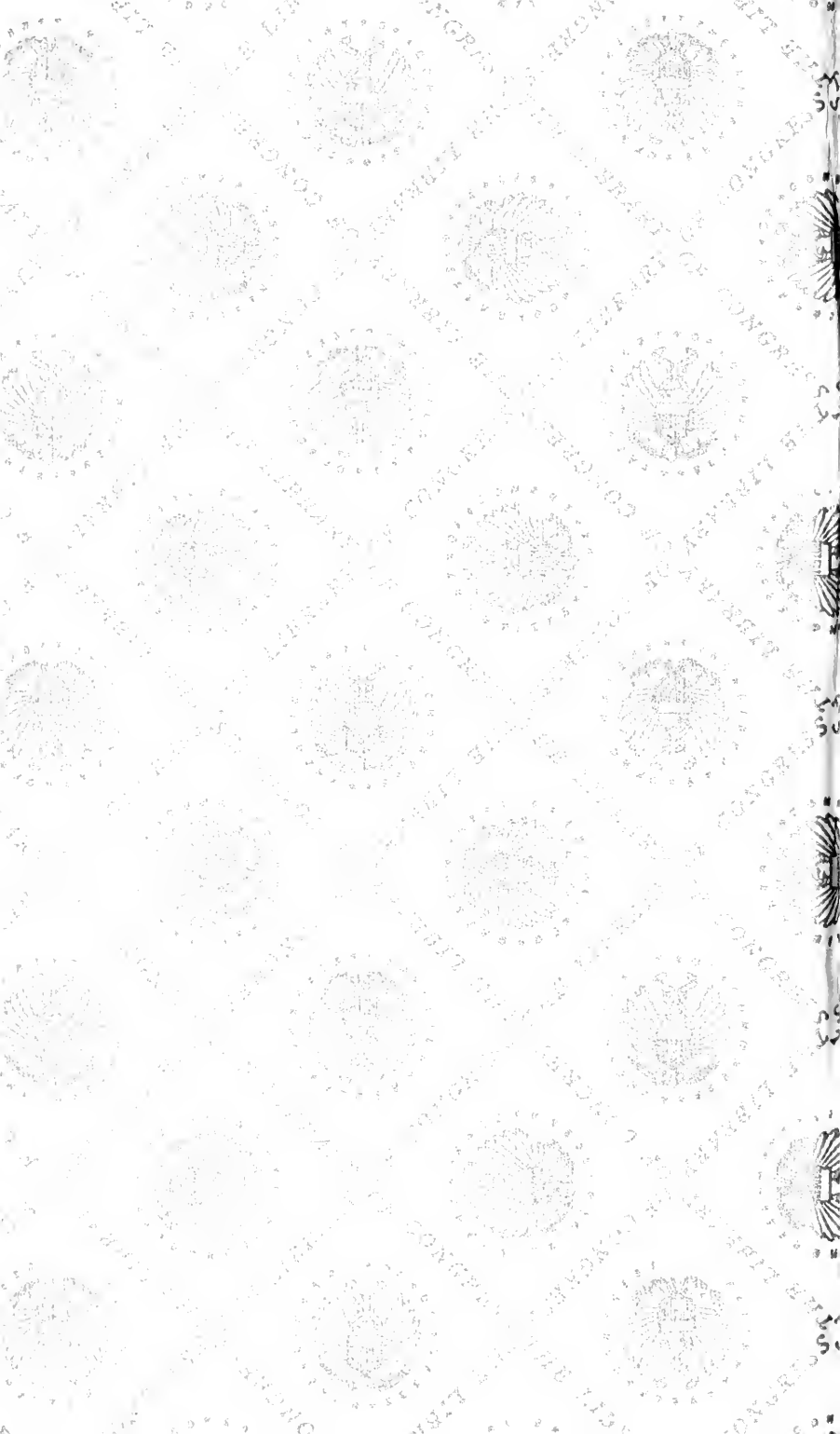


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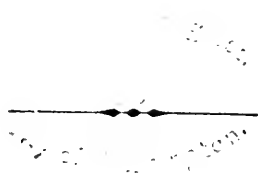
OF

## NEW YORK.

A PICTURE OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS  
AFTER NIGHTFALL.

By Members of the New York Press.

Illustrations by Frank Beard.



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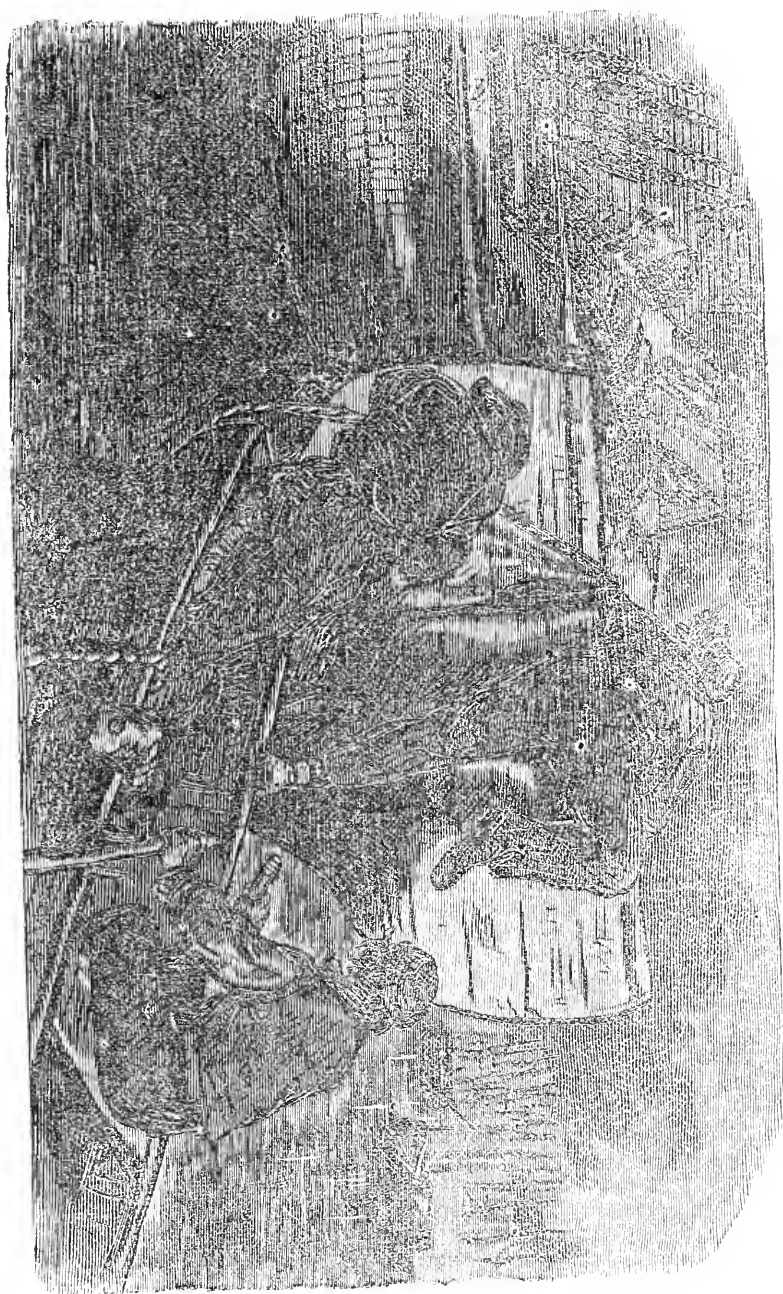
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of the daily papers with glowing accounts of marvellous banquets to fêted or celebrated foreign politicians visiting our shores? Then there is the Century Club, what high old times for dignified gentlemen, they kick up there, on "Twelfth Night," perhaps—how they don old clothes and grey wigs, put a harp in some aged fellow's hand and play at Shakespeare times! how the public read of all these queer doings and wonder what their clubs are made of. That some of these clubs are very social and draw into their vortex the best men of the city, is not to be disputed—and that many of them are as notorious for gambling as the haunts of the statues adorning the corners of Prince street and Broadway, is equally true. But that most of them are the refuge of henpecked husbands, the breeders of domestic dissention, a conclave of male gossips—who will deny? Be this as it may, we are writing of clubs, not intending to moralize over them—we take the following extract from an interesting paper, written some years ago, on New York Clubs and Clubmen:

"In America, until within a few years back, clubs were almost unknown; and even now, in our most wealthy city, New York, they hold but a very subordinate place in the social structure, compared with the clubs of London.

"Of the New York clubs, the Union, established in 1822, is alike the oldest and the wealthiest. Its grounds and buildings cost over \$200,000. It has about five hundred members. One hundred dollars is charged as entrance-fee, and the annual subscription amounts to fifty dollars. Its president is Hon. John A. King, late Governor of the State of New York. It counts among its membership many men of note in arts, literature, politics and commerce. Bancroft, the Astors, General Scott, F. B. Cutting, Charles O'Connor, and others, are members of the Union.

"The Century Club is composed of authors, artists, and amateurs of letters and the fine arts. The entrance-fee is forty dollars, and the annual subscription twenty-four dollars. The number of members is limited to two hundred and fifty. Most of the best known American authors and artists are members of the Century: Bryant, Taylor, Kensett, Curtis, Bancroft, Butler, Church the painter, Darley, Gulian C. Verplanck, the last named being at present its president.

"It may be of interest to note some of the rules and restrictions regarding club amusements in the United States. In the Union Club all games of hazard are prohibited. It is, however, permitted to play whist for as high a stake as five dollars per game of ten points, or two and a half dollars per game of five points. Billiards may be played for a dinner of the value of one dollar per game of a hundred points. The introduction of dogs is peremptorily prohibited. As might be supposed, smoking is allowed in all parts of the house except upon the first floor. No games are permitted to be played on Sunday. In most other respects the rules and regulations and management of the clubs of New York, Philadelphia and Boston are very similar to those of their prototypes, the clubs of London."

Let us enter one of these famous New York clubs—a fashionable club, in modern parlance—where the members are all gentlemen, as



far as the tailor and a strict adherence to the rules of society go to manufacture that nondescript animal. The club house, in exterior, is very imposing, a large four story stone front, its locality is unquestionable, for it is on the Fifth avenue, that St. Germain of New York ; we mount a flight of stone steps, ring the bell, which is immediately answered by a very respectable individual with carefully shaved whiskers, black suit, swallow tail cut, white cravat and slippers, his whole air is decidedly "Hinglish" and the very prototype of a London lacquey. There is no question as to our right of entrance, so we leave this highly respectable door keeper to his easy chair in the square entrance hall, and enter the spacious parlor at the right. A gorgeous chandelier lends the light of a score of burners upon the drawing room scene. The furniture is heavy and luxurious, fresh from the hands of the most fashionable upholsterers. An elaborate centre-table stands beneath the chandelier, upon it are a dozen richly bound volumes of the best of poet authors. They look unsoiled and we know that they are seldom troubled. The walls are elegantly frescoed, for the mansion was, until very recently, the residence of a fashionable family, whose taste in these matters is unquestionable. That big bay window, in the day time, is always patronised by a dozen youthful members, who sport eyeglasses and ogle female promenaders. A few chairs drawn towards it now mark the spot that these young bucks about town love to haunt in the full glow of an afternoon's sun. Passing from this room through a glass door, we enter the billiard room ; the tables are all occupied and a dozen anxious waiters are watching jealously each count that lessens the score of each player. These patient waiters are not as numerous as one would expect, for none but fair players are bold enough to handle a cue here where each game is so severely criticised, and then the stakes are rather heavy. This apartment was once a carefully arranged conservatory, and before its being turned into a billiard room was a scene almost enchanting. Orange trees, fragrant and choice exotics intoxicated the senses with their perfume and beauty ; a fountain cooled the air and the music of its spray charmed whoever lingered over its marble basin. What romantic tales could its walls whisper, what warm words from loving lips dropped in this consecrated spot, in the good times not very long past ? Bah ! the monotonous green of these long tables, the continual clanking of the clashing balls, dispel all the romance of this once hallowed, pretty chamber. Mounting the broad staircase, startled a little by the shadowy form of knightly armor holding solitary sentinel in the niches in the walls, we come into the card or smoking room of the floor above. We are now within the inner court—beyond that veil, if rent, would show up the fascinations of club-life. This room is the cosiest and most luxurious in the building. Warm colored walls, a cheerful fire, easy seats deep sinking and soft, lolling smokers and lazy loungers all congregate here. Here the sporting man, the moderate gambler, the inveterate old whist player, and all lovers of play lounge far into the night. Let us sketch one group—it will be a sample picture for the most inquisitive of all outsiders. In this quartet is represented a wrinkled old naval officer, a spruce looking young merchant, a short, fat, jolly doctor, and a sunburnt visitor from the sunny South. They

had well advanced in their game, as we entered, and the young merchant and the doctor showed plainly by their pleased looks that they had pushed their opponents sorely. It was a little interesting to note how indifferent the sallow Southern took his share of ill-luck in comparison with the angry scowl of the old sea dog; to the latter came shortly the deal. The polite Virginian offered to deal for him, but the sour old lord of the quarter-deck seized the pack with a bungling grace that sent half the cards upon the floor. With a deep mouthed, salt water oath, he dashed the remnant after them, and tearing the cover from a fresh pack, proceeded slowly to deal them—the young merchant seeing the ill-humor with which his aged opponent took his luck, winked slyly at his partner and assumed an air of confidence, arguing further success. It was a high trump that he of the navy finished his deal with—but it lessened not his ill humor. We saw him pour down a wholesome horn that would have staggered a landsman. Squinting at his hand and then at his trump, he bid his neighbor “fire away.” The old salt was evidently a veteran at the battle of whist, and with the very fair hand that had fallen to him he fired away. The luck turning, the young merchant looked perplexed, and the doctor, sipping his brandy, shook his head and brought all his science to bear upon the game. He, too, was no ordinary player. A trump card of the Southern was straddled by a higher, and the old commodore saw with disgust a trick that he counted upon carried off by his opponents. The eyes of the Virginian flashed with latent fire, wine had heated his brain and he attempted to cover his waning fortune by a higher wager. There was a pause. Idle members drew their seats nearer the party, and deserted all the other card tables. Words were loudly spoken, wine flowed freely, the propriety of increasing the wager at that state of the game looked hazardous; it was settled, however, and the game went on. A careless revoke on the part of the doctor, which had a very “queer” look to an outsider, jarred the harmony once more, and caused the commodore to bleed his oaths very freely. Bets passed between the outsiders, orders for beverages increased, and as the tide in the naval officer’s glass went down, the game seemed all his way. The Southerner flashed his diamond ring and dealt his cards superbly, with an ease that showed an old hand at the “picturs.” The doctor and the merchant in the end yielded the winnings, and as they were puffing away at a brace of solacing weeds in the reading room a few moments later, we heard the latter rather hissingly compliment the old sea dog. This is but an every-night scene; sometimes the excitement is even greater and the bets heavier. Add to all this the circulating gossip that a congregation like this are ever retailing, then you may conceive of the fascination of a club house. The doctor whose patients are in Madison Square and on Murray Hill, sees a good deal of life that is veiled to the rest of the world; what a zest his anecdotes and gossip has! The banker who holds your balances and knows your wealth to a penny, how he is button-holed by fathers having marriageable sons or daughters. Then the lawyer, so very reticent you could trust him with a fearful secret you think, alas! how the good wine loosens his tongue! What strange things he whispers here, that his society may gather a few choice spirits

at his elbow ! From the card room we pass into the *salle-a-manger*. Here you will see ponderous members, hungry members, members who love to tickle the palate, who sit long over their wine, who have no thought for a wife and family at home dining off cold mutton, while they revel on the good things of this life. For such we trust there is a severe Caudle lecture awaiting them this night—a heavier reckoning than the little bill of the steward, the amount of which would be bountiful indeed to their pale, pinched wives, studying the hard code of an economical household. Here you can feed according to the extent of your purse, and if that be limited, stretch it a little by going into the steward's account until a month's end brings you and him to a settlement. The settlements are not all as prompt as one would think in a congregation that represents so much of the wealth of our city. Sometimes this steward accommodates the gentlemen, but at a ruinous rate of interest. He will even advance money to those who have played deep, or to whom a short loan would be a God-send. He is certainly the most popular officer of the whole club, and his berth is a sinecure that yields an income not to be sneezed at. The bill of fare you'll find changed each day, and is as various as the carte at Delmonico's or the *Maison Dorée*. The reading room is well supplied with all the latest newspapers, foreign and domestic, quarterlies and monthlies. Here you can write a business letter undisturbed, or indite an amorous billet in placid quietness. Whatever can promote social enjoyment and an agreeable evening's entertainment not inconsistent with its rules, is the study of the officers of the club. How far they have succeeded is too apparent in this crowd of devotees. There are nights—very seldom in their occurrence though, and marked by a white stone—when the lady friends of the members are invited to pass a social hour here. Music is furnished, and creams and ices passed around. But Mrs. Grundy sees nothing there that she could even shake her umbrella at. But as the night is waning, we must depart. Carriages and hacks lumber the street; members—some in husky and very inarticulate voices—are hailing their several drivers; some are going home to sleep off their deep potations, and a few, whose appetites for play have not been the least appalled by the moderate rules of the house, are going to where they can play yet deeper, and revel in a passion that has been fanned into a flame by losses or gains in their own club.

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE FASHIONABLE CONCERT SALOON.

It has long been a byword that our metropolis is the easiest and worse-governed city of the world. One would judge so, as in his walks about by night he sees so many flaunting vices, multiplying and brazen-faced, from the very laxity of our police system. Rowdy-haunted gin palaces on every corner, gambling saloons your next door nuisances, who can say how long his own favored home-

stead is to be spared? Are they not getting bolder and bolder each day, these depraved panders to a vicious taste? Even the sacred shadows of church towers are no bars to the impudent designs of their projectors. With a slow tide of vice surging quietly on, how soon will it be ere its polluted stream finds a channel in each of the fairest portions of our city? It was a very bold step, that flaunting a gorgeous "concert saloon" in the very heart of the fashionable world—nay, its very walls run beneath the hearthstones of the aristocracy, sending the gleam of its flaring lights in golden bars on the very doorsteps of Fifth avenue. Under the nose of Madison Square, in the locality of the big marble hotels, flourishes the gigantic "*Louvre*." Undermining the better part of a block, its spacious saloons stretch away to the right and left, saloon beyond saloon. Substantial columns, massive as the park gates, divide hall from hall. That room to the left is the billiard room; this middle apartment the grand drinking hall, with its great bar; and under the alcoves there at the end, on the right, are more retired tippling places. The walls are frescoed and painted with the rarest of artistic skill. Broad bands of gold, great pannels of deep emerald, baskets of luscious fruit, purple grapes in heavy clusters, golden apples, and sunny flowers all but fragrant. In the centre of the middle hall a statue fountain shoots its cooling spray, and the myriads of lights, gleaming on it, turn its shower into a cascade of sparkles. Gold and silver fish sport at its base, and green mosses encircle its big white basin. The great bar is very rich with varied colored cut glass and silver ware, and numerous mirrors reflecting the bright lights, the gay walls, and the motley crowd hanging in every conspicuous corner. In the billiard room you'll find plenty of the youths of the "best society" chalking their cues and pocketing the "reds"; in the main hall a scene of tempered carousal; in the alcoves quiet Germans sipping lager and winking at the pretty waitresses. Let us take one of these alcoved tables where these lamb-like, long-whiskered Teutons are enjoying their beer, and survey this tippling congregation. There are about two hundred thirsty and loving bacchanalians enjoying themselves, or pretending to do so, beneath the charms and smiles of some thirty "pretty waitresses." Pretty is the term set down on the "bills"—its application literally is a "whopper," for the better part of these Hebes and female Ganymedes are very coarse, fat and prodigiously ugly. The youth who would style them all beautiful, or feel the palpitations of his heart getting very audible by the fascinations of their presence, is made of different stuff from ordinary mortals, or is very deep in his cups. Yet there are a few—you could count them with your fingers—who are not ordinary, and in the every-day crowd of Broadway would be styled attractive. One of these is presiding over the destinies of a bottle of "Widow Cliquot," and clinking her small iced goblet with the flowing cups of a party of well-dressed young, evidently very English, cockneys, to whom the "concert saloon" is of the old country style, and a familiar institution. The champagne is resting in an ice bucket at the side of the table, and one bottle follows another closely. They are very red-faced from the deepness of their rosy potations, their complexion weather-stained from a recent Atlantic cruise; pendant whiskers, sandy as

the soil of Jersey, cut in the Lord Dundreary style, adorn them all. They talk very loud, are very earnest in their admirations of the presiding beauty, and now and then let fly a squib at the wide difference between Yankeedom and the land of their royal Queen. Hebe gets a little indignant at this, and with the slightest pout to her lips, and the least bit of indignation in her eyes, retorts rather sarcastically. The other females who occasionally press past the group cast very envious eyes at her, for they know before the meeting breaks up Hebe will rejoice in a better-lined purse, and some day in the future sport another diamond ring on her well-loaded hand. Shall we sketch this fair and frail sister? Clad in a dark dress, sitting very elegantly on her well-defined bust and falling in graceful folds, its sombre material sets off well the dazzling whiteness of her round throat and snowy hands; her chin is dimpled, her lips very red, and wear a luscious and habitual pout, her nose is thin and straight, her large eyes dark hazel, with a long shadow of black lashes; her hair is raven, very heavy and glossy; a golden band binds her forehead, and down her back falls clusters of pendent curls, and as she tosses her well-shaped hand, very conscious of her winning charms, there's a queenly grace that in hearts less steeled than the major portion of the youths about town, would work fearful havoc. The portly old figure at the bar, and his busy staff, look very much pleased as they cast a frequent glance at the table, for this Hebe is a great coiner to them of a golden vintage.

"Kant yer drink some more of the wine, my dear?" says the first cockney to her, as he peers with bloodshot eyes at her yet untasted glass. "Duced good wine, for this country; not so good as at the Al'ambra, in Lun'on, tho'; kant yer take a bit more, tho'?"

Hebe looks at the bottle in the bucket (it's nearly empty), then at the cormorants at the bar, who express an unmistakable "go ahead." Hebe says she likes fresh wine; she's afraid that in the bottle's flat.

"Gwacious! what a chawming queature," says another son of Britannia, and the soft youth calls for a fresh bottle of "Madame Cliquot." Hebe has a share in the profits of the wine, and the sly puss shows it in the merry twinkle she throws at the bar; so she goes on bewitching and befoozling these English sports—dukes or bagmen—drinking very little and very cautiously, too, until far into the midnight; and when they break up, a gold sovereign or two will glisten as it changes hands, and deeper and more sensational scenes will close a nightly farce.

We turn from this group to others less notable. They are the faces of those very familiar at the law courts, whose tongues at the bar are very eloquent in lashing the depraving vices of the day—great champions of public virtue; faces also well known on 'Change, in the gold room, and in private banking offices; faces of city officers, aldermen and councilmen, who sit in grave state in the boards of our free schools, and talk so morally to delinquent teachers and infant scholars; faces of newspaper men—men who indite such heavy articles on waning virtue; faces of boys, nervous and dazzled with their new-found excitement, beardless and pale, trembling at the very excitement of the smiles of a coarse damsel dealing them their cups of lager, and puffing with her own lips their

fresh-ordered segars ; faces of old men, dried and withered as the shrinking gourd, the deep furrows flushed, yet the eyelids not too stiff to give wicked winks at these attendant girls. Faces of portly Germans, whiskered and spectacled, drinking, meditating and smoking philosophically ; these faces generally peer at you from the quiet and screened alcoves, they hang long over their lager, they hide behind great veils of tobacco smoke, expressionless, rayless, inanimate. Girls of their own country, natives of Munich and Berlin, administer to their quiet thirst, unrewarded by caresses or bounteous smiles. To the careful observer, these Rip Van Winkles partake of a solid enjoyment unknown to the restless portion of the house. Sleeping beauties, or automaton wax figures would not be inappropriate servers for these lethargic customers. Demonstrations of a very warm nature are not in vogue at the "Louvre" ; the amorous caresses of the lower saloons are seldom exercised here ; order reigns supreme, and the wild hilarity of their carousals is strictly prohibited. Yet in what other respects differs this first-class place from its bolder neighbors ? Are its waitresses more virtuous, its patrons more Godly ? There is not a very wide line between them. Some one of these bankers may be a Jenkins. You'll know some day what a wild gambler or dexterous burglar is nursing in this fold of beardless, maudlin youths. Those girls may be pretty now ; they are young yet ; but the beauty will fade, their gentle manners, blunted by vicious association, grow into the coarse ways of the painted hawd. If one should die to-night, shot by a jealous rival in this banquet hall, a train of mourners would follow to her grave—a little time hence ? Good God ! the pine box, the careless undertaker ! And in the cold, damp morning the blue bloused grave-digger will shake the ashes from his pipe on her coffin, and stamp with heavy boots the red clay of her last bed ! They tell you that a cruel stepmother—the penury of an orphan home—drove them to this employment. Well, believe a few who, with an honest tear, in falling voice, tell us so. But cold, searching reason reads deep. Love of dress, inherent indolence, and envy of the wild prodigality of the fashionable world of to-day, swell the ranks of the *pretty waitresses*.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### SATURDAY NIGHT AT A PAWNBROKER'S.

THE sun gilds no brighter golden globes than the three brass cherries of Barney Meyers. For years they have hung from those iron branches, and it's a long while ago since they sprang from the bricks of Barney's four-story Loan-office. Before Barney's time, another Meyers of the household of Judah sprouted them, and gilded and re-gilded them just as the present Barney does, and future Barneys will do, until the Jews are all gathered into one fold, and the pawnbroker's knocked into Jericho. Barney's mansion is planted in one

of those streets running out of Broadway, in which, in the memory of citizens scarcely counting grey hairs, once lived the best people of our town. Marble steps and carved doorways are the lingering traces of their sumptuous homes. Bar-rooms, billiard saloons, ware-rooms and foreign boarding-houses now claim a foothold there. It does not matter in which of these by-ways Barney's brass cherries glitter in the sun; suffice to say that Meyers is no myth, but life and blood, a hater of pork, an observer of the Seventh Day, and a devotee to almost an infatuation of the little goddess of modern parlance—Soap.

It's now past six o'clock, Saturday, August, 18—. The red sun has gone down, and the Sabbath of Barney Meyers has ended. Out of the door pops Barney to unlunge the shutters and shove them into an open cellar under the window. These obstacles to a full view of Meyers' front door and window are quickly skinned off. In the yellow twilight we behold the effect. The window to the right is boxed off, and a strong iron grating protects the glass—to the depth of a foot or so. This receptacle is well stored with an endless variety of secondhand personal effects. Some are jewels, some are musical instruments, some are deadly weapons; some are old and quaint, some new and very brassy. They are unredeemed pledges—pledges that have outrun their time—pledges that never will be redeemed. Their owners having drunk themselves dead, thrown themselves into the river, expatriated for crimes or grown rich, are too respectable and proud to be seen entering the portals of a pawn-broker's shop again. Above this window, and in the door to the left, the glass is all whitened and untransparent—the secrets of the shop being of too delicate a nature for outside speculation and speculation. On these opaque panes, Barney has again produced his three cherries, but they are very black, and not as tempting as the golden fruit outside. Here, also, in gigantic letters, that stare the street up and down—tempting signals to the eyes of anxious pawners—is terribly written that sign of the usurer's black art—"Money Lent." In the last gleams of the setting sun we hang Barney's portrait. He is young yet, scarcely thirty, medium-sized, not very broad-shouldered or strong-limbed—these young Jews seldom are. His feet are small, his hands very white and delicate; he uses them nimbly, for he is dexterity itself at cards, shuffling or sorting money and swinging a quill. On the fourth finger you'll see a big, massive, chased ring, the chasing well worn—scarcely discernible, for progenitors, that reach back to Jerusalem, have handed it down; his neck is short, his head round, and encased in a scalp of black shiny ringlets, glossy as the beard of a freshly anointed; his forehead is low—very low—a physiognomist would shrug his shoulders at such a little bit of fleshy parchment; his eyes are blacker than even his ringlets, the balls protruding, the pupils large and dilated, set in a rim of long lashes growing in an oval of red: his nose is what De Cordova would style the steeple of a Jewish synagogue—running out from his forehead very thin, and fattening thick as it curves at its base. His lips are thick and red—you'd call them voluptuous in the picture of a woman—a narrow moustache, like the teeth of a black horn comb, enhances the fullness of his mouth. His skin is olive—darker than his hands;

he is always fearfully pale, and when excited, colorless as a piece of parchment. His is the face of a Jew—an unmistakable type of the sons of Abraham. His manner is very winning, and he has a score of friends. He is always full of business, and stands at the head of his profession. He has a joke for everybody, and deals out plenty of sympathy for the most unfortunate of his customers; but he is avaricious and grinding, and the most piteous tale never won an easier bargain. Such is Barney Meyers, pawn-broker, and proprietor of the famous establishment into which we now enter. The first floor of the building runs half the depth of the lot, then rises a few steps and then stretches to the rear. At the right is a short counter, divided into stalls having doors, and closely screen the customer transacting a loan or redeeming a pledge. The four walls, from the floor to the ceiling, and the stories above to the very roof, are netted with little square pigeon holes—receptacles of every variety of human apparel, personal property, professional instruments, and the devil knows what. There is the worn shawl of the poor apple-woman, the rich ball dress of a fascinating lady, the velvet doublet of the actor, the tools of a sick workman—his saw, his rule, his compass, the paints, the pallet, the brushes of the unfortunate artist, and the pride of his heart—the unfinished pictures torn from the easel; the blanket of some shivering sewing-girl, the faro-box and pistols of the ruined gambler. On the floor, under the counter, strewn everywhere, are pieces of bulky furniture, leather bags, work-boxes, statues, vases, sewing-machines, rolls of carpets, the canvas bundle of the sailor, the knapsack of the volunteer. The sacking of a city, the household of a Toodles, the outfit of a colony, present no rivalling scene to the contents of Barney's shop. Emptied on the sidewalk, dumped into the streets, in one monument to the memory of defrauded pledges, every class of society, every branch of science, every trade known to men would have contributed a memento. It is Saturday night, we have said, and it's a busy time in the old pawn-shop. Workmen have been paid their weekly allowance, and have sent their thinly-clad, care-worn wives to redeem numerous little household articles "spouted" to meet some pressing necessity, or pawned to eke the outlay of some devouring drunk. Others have come in, knowing that an empty larder is the most pitiable of all Sunday woes. Now and then leer out of the stalls deep, sunken, bruised, famishing eyes, hollow from the want of food, tearless, vacant and wandering—eyes of hungry wolves, tired of roaming a cheerless desert clamoring for a bit of money in exchange for the worthless scraping of their poor stock—eyes that are sick of the sight of moaning, debauched husbands wallowing in drink, making their homes kennels of satanic revels—eyes that are glazing slowly, surely, soon to be closed forever on the sickening scenes of the hard battle of life—eyes bedimmed with scorching tears—tears that are dropping a woful shower on the pale lips of emaciated infants sucking at famished breasts; now and then the scene is relieved by the apparition of the features of some rouged courtesan, flaunting her brazen face, scarred with the scourge of a polluted life; sometimes it's the modest face of struggling virtue, hooded and veiled, as if it were risking its chance of paradise; again, it's the blush of an extravagant youth, come to the end of his



purse and his credit, entering the tainted exchange for the first time, and promising in his inmost heart that it shall be the last. Now there is a lull, and the young Jew boys, Barney's aids, can attend to all the demands of the counter. We draw Barney into conversation; we offer him a Havana, for the perfume of these musty and worn garments walling us around have the very stench of old shrouds. Barney, as an offset, brings out of a locker a bottle of old wine; these Isrealites seldom drink of the fiery draughts that are such potent agents in stimulating the prosperity of these very institutions. The wine is old and very choice; it's rather unpalatable to us from the thought, "from what sick-bed came this rare liquor, the charity, perhaps, of some rich lady to a penniless sufferer?" But Barney has no such scruples, and he smacks his raw lips with the gusto of a connoisseur of wines. He's characteristically loquacious, and the good wine has oiled his tongue; seated on a big iron chest, the receptacle of all plate and jewelry, he tells us many interesting little romances of his mysterious profession—the pilgrimage of a wedding-ring that had outrun its time of pawn; how the initials and date, in this gold band, of two loving hearts, were erased, the ring sold and gone forever, he supposed; how it came back again one night—it's identity was unmistakable; how it lay in the old safe six months or more, when, strange to say, it's first owner came to trace it, a fruitless search, he supposed. "I never lets dem be sold now; de price he's paid of dat will cover de loss of de monish on de others," he said, shaking his oily ringlets. Barney can show family bibles, nay, with the very records of a household—its deaths, its births, its marriages. One shudders at the fatal depths into which want or corrupted morals could have cast a mortal soul that pawned that sacred relic of a family history—that code of blood that, in pale ink, traced, perhaps, in the small letters of a mother's hand, told of the day it first saw the joyous light of God's earth—of the sorrowful hour that saw the last breathings of an anguished sister's or brother's heart. Oh, the mysteries of life in this great city. Oh, the dark secrets of this weird, death-smelling house! What endless romances haunts its mouldy walls! Do you doubt the truth or the possibility of the following:

"One gusty night, many years ago, when my uncle, old Abraham Meyers, kept this shop, there came in a very timid female, well advanced in life, for old Abraham saw a silver curl shining beneath her well-muffled face. She wanted to raise a sum of money on as elegant a jeweled watch as ever the old man gave a ticket for. As the amount of money to be loaned was considerable, the old fellow questioned her closely to satisfy himself he was running no risk, in other words, "spouting" on stolen property; she was simple at heart, and confidently told him that her needs were to meet the expenses of an only daughter's marriage. She would have taken it to a jeweller, but as she treasured it, and earnestly hoped to redeem it at an early day, had come to him. He often had such dealings with people in the best of society, but these generally employed a confidential domestic; he surmised that she was too reduced to even employ a servant; he accommodated her and she went out. Months rolled on, and still the jeweled watch was unredeemed. At the end of the year a young lady in deep mourning came in and entered

that second stall. I had that day left school, had been placed by my parent in this shop as an assistant to old Jacob ; I had not yet learned one of the first regulations of our trade—never to be astonished, even at an angel coming in to pawn a golden harp. I essayed to wait upon her ; she wanted the old man ; I eyed her intently ; it was a novel sight, such a neatly-dressed lady, to one whose short experience had only beheld an endless string of old hags. Her bereavement I guessed was recent, for I saw her once lift her black veil and brush away a tear. Her face, I saw, was as beautiful as that print of Rebecca hanging over that brace of pistols yonder ; it burnt upon my vision ; I never saw, among all you Christians, one so charming. When the old man could wait upon her, judge of his surprise when she unrolled the ticket for the jeweled watch. It was natural he should question her. “It was an aged lady, madam, who left this here months ago,” he said. “My mother ;” it was all she answered ; the pathos of lamentation was in those words. He surmised all ; the lady with the silver curl was dead—the old yellow ticket with the secret of that gusty night revealed. When she went out, he reproved me sharply for staring so intently at a well-dressed customer ; I never was guilty of that offence after. Some of my customers never see the color of my eyes, yet I can pick them out of a throng. Time flew on ; we thought no more of the beautiful lady’s jeweled watch ; it was an almost every-day transaction, the pawning of such rare jewels. Old Abraham, gone out of the business, had forgotten her, but the recollection of her beauty still haunted my vision. It is almost a proverb, and my daily transactions have verified it, that a “sport” seldom makes less than two journeys over the three globes. Three years ago, a young sport about town, one of those statues that still have their gallery on the corner of Prince street and Broadway—a familiar face to me and our counter, having run dry, sauntered into our shop. His eyes were bleared and bloodshot. I saw that drink, with that fuel, the love of gaming, was burning away his life rapidly. His long moustache and beard were matted with dust ; although young, his hair was whitening ; he had grown old within a month. Taking from his side pocket a beautiful pearl-hilted dagger, he laid it on the counter ; valuable, though it was, it would not cover the amount he needed ; a gold chain was wreathed upon the dagger, and yet I informed him that our margin was too narrow ; he then produced a jeweled locket, and with the point of his dagger extracted the miniature that it guarded. His fingers were trembling ; his nerves unstrung ; he made bungling work of it. Believe me, that miniature was the likeness of that identical female who, years ago, had entered our shop. I could study its features well from the slow work he made in digging it out. This, then, was the husband ; to adorn his bride in wedding wreaths, the lady with the silver curl had pawned that jeweled watch ; the circumstances were too uncontrollable. That night, this unfortunate wretch was wounded and robbed in Prince street ; the jeweled watch came to me next morning ; a detective following close upon the heels of the pawnier got the watch and the pawnier too.

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## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CHEAP THEATRE.

"444."

THERE are several theatres in this big city, popular, and well attended by a certain class, which are beyond the pale of criticism. Their "stars" rise, shine and wane, innocent of the "puffs" of the daily press; the approaching steps of their triumphal march are not heralded by big letters, in all hues, illuminating vacant walls, straggling fences and rural rocks. The chief scenes of their great acts are never aired on gaudy canvas or in flaming woodcuts—making great picture galleries of our highways and by-ways.

Do you remember when Professor Pepper's Ghost had the run of our Broadway theatres, how all the rocks and fences from the City Hall to Harlem were haunted with skeletons? Just now we are regaled with the "Scarlet Woman." Who comes next to have their *carte de visite*, six feet by four, hung all day and night in the street galleries to be decapitated by the street boys—Extract of Boo! Hoo! on the coat-tails—or to go home to the shanty of a rag-picker in the bottom of her old canvas sack? Perhaps it's a pleasure to be deprived of all this; many thin-skinned people think so; but we guess that the artists of the "cheap theatres" rather envy their brother "lions" of the higher class, when, in all their "walks abroad," they see their elephantine cards staring at them from every corner. Deprived of all this, however, they make a little "show" under the shadow of the box-office; the lithographer and the photographer multiply them in all costumes and postures, and they hang in the entrance halls of their several theatres, to the edification of a gaping crowd of the patrons of their genius, or admirers of their charms. Perhaps 444 Broadway is the most notable of these cheap theatres. It certainly is the best patronized. The big lantern before its entrance flames as lustily as in its palmy days, when it shed its beams on the tide of pleasure seekers flocking to that shrine of cork and wool—the first home of the renowned Wood's Minstrels. After a glance at the pictures of its troupe, the most attractive of which are those of the "ballet," we pitch down its steep entrance-way, almost stumbling over the door-keeper from its precipitancy. The hall that we now enter is well filled; it is very capacious and well-ventilated, except the low gallery which half encircles the crescent-shaped building; this is but a nest of sweating boxes, and their occupants have rather a hot stamping ground. Half of the ground floor is divided by a wire wicket, the other side of which is known to the attentive reader of the programme as the orchestra chair settlement—a sort of aristocratic part of the house; boxes, gaudy with loud upholstery, flank the stage, and are generally empty, except of a Saturday *matinée*—they style them *matinées*, even here—when some woman of the *semi-demi monde* is bold enough to haunt them. The stage is capacious, and its drop up to style. The orchestra was well filled with a band of the most tenacious Dutchmen that ever

scraped a fiddle—blank-eyed, whisker-faced, careworn, spectacled musicians—not a sensual mouth among them, yet with such a shaking of plump female limbs over their very eyelids! They sawed, they blew, they pounded drums, uncomplaining and never weary, yet never smiling, and the whole house in convulsions.

The audience was a conglomeration of all classes, for the whispers that have gone forth of the sly double jokes related at Butler's establishment have reached ears far and wide. The galleries, the admission to which is fifteen cents, were groaning with young boot-blacks, unfledged rowdies, shiftless loafers, and representatives of the mercantile community, who deal limitedly in pippins and ice-cream. The parquette, the twenty-five cent locality, enjoyed the society of young men about town, who pick up a precarious living, and have a great weakness for corner groceries, some old men with the odor of car stables, sailors, soldiers, and gentlemen employed in repairing our highways, were also conspicuous spectators; the select orchestral chairs—many of them a long way from the orchestra—were devoted to the comfort of numerous drygoods drummers and their country customers, members of the bar, proprietors of bars, youths who lunch at Berry's and drink black coffee at midnight at Delmonico's, individuals who patronize faro banks, gents who finger large quantities of money in other banks, clerks and blacklegs, Fulton market butchers and navy officers.

The play-bill, which is as long as your arm—for they don't spare actor, time nor musician in this hospitable entertainment—announces fourteen different entertainments, many of which are encored and then encored again, spinning it to past twenty in number, and almost five hours in time. Its variety is as notable as its length; songs, dances and farces crowd one another to the end. Another feature, and which adds much to the success of the proprietor, is the restless activity of the performers; nothing lags; the singer rushes through his song, the darkey jumps at his jokes, and the legs of the ballet-girls are always twinkling; and it may be said, with truth, that the heels of the scene-shifter never are cool, and the echoes of the prompter's bell never dies out. Liberty to smoke in any part of the house is another peculiarity of the cheap theatre. Segar vendors patrol the building, and "'Ave a segar, sir?" rings from parquette to gallery; the sententious leader of the band smokes, the violins and the bass-viol smokes, so would the horn and the flute if they could puff the weed through the keys of their instruments. The vile pipe of the mender of highways, the cigarette of the youth, the black cabbage-roll of the rough and the light Havana of the bank clerk, all mingle the perfumes of their smoke wreaths in one rank, misty cloud, that hangs aloft as an offering to the shrine of their favorite gods. We must confess there was something oriental in lolling in one's seat, puffing at ease, gazing through the smoke at the graceful limbs of large-eyed dancing-girls.

Prompt on time shot the curtain to the dust and cobwebs over the stage; out from the side scenes pops a darkey clog-dancer; as the music of his brass heels clattering on the boards rings through the hall, the eyes of the gallery are on him. There is a crowding to the front places, standing on seats, leaning on shoulders, gazing on their very knees, this portion of the audience show their unmistakable

ble appreciation of the jig-dancer; their very eyes glisten at the sight of his silver belt, and there are no bounds to their admiration when the pipe-stem legs, in black velvet, contort themselves into some fantastic position, and amble around the stage in faultless time. This fellow had probably received his early dancing education in the bunk-room of a fire company. To dance a jig or a "step around" was a cardinal point in a faultlessly-nursed fire-boy.

After this jig came the ballet, the attractive feature of the evening's entertainment—the heavy trump card of the cheap theatre. The scenic artist gave us a hot, blistering scene somewhere in the Torrid Zone, where burning bushes, volcanic eruptions and noon-day heat are the orthodox condition of things. Perhaps this was done more out of sympathy for the scantily-robed females who now crowded the stage in all the splendor of meretricious spangles and fleecy gauze. When the dancing of these nymphs commenced, it was too apparent why the front seats nearest the foot-lights had been so eagerly gobbled up by a party of vicious-looking youths, who had gone very early, and were considerably wrought up with anticipating anxiety. We never saw such a promiscuous, startling and very loose flinging about of flesh-colored tights. It would be a bold assertion to say that these females (their pictures are hung at the door,) were all pretty or well formed. But certainly, distance lending enchantment to the view—the blending of high colors and powder and rouge—false hair in its most fascinating weathings—all combined to make a very pretty picture; then contrast their remarkably pure white and new dresses, their dazzling arms and snowy busts in the flood of light, with the rough crowd and foul, tobacco-reeking hall, so dimly lighted, and you'll not wonder that an enthralling enchantment should blind the many who drink their first draught at these poisonous fountains. The dancing was not of the first order; the dancers were, with one or two exceptions, clumsy and heavy; the limbs of some were faulty, and the more lank and shaky. They all knew the parts down on the bill of engagement for them—they emulated each other literally to "toe the mark" the highest. Many of these poor girls have had the run of the theatres—clattered their castanets to very moral and respectable ears; and one shudders at the course of training that first led them to the foot-lights, from which they have danced down, down to this almost the lowest haunt of the pleasure-seeker.

The comic songs in character which followed, and which were sandwiched in between each scene, were not very meritorious—you'd hear better at any of the Free and Easy's just round the block. The inevitable Irish Paddy, whacking his shillaleh, forgetting his brogue, or mixing the Yankee twang with the uncouth hog latin of a Yorkshireman. These are miserable representatives to one who may have seen a Barney Williams or a John Brougham. But there was one exception: Billy Holmes. What is 444 without Billy?—Billy with his high white hat, his heavy moustache, his velvet coat, his check pants? If you'd see a jolly sport in character, look at Billy; so tall, so comic, so inventive—for it's known to many that Billy Holmes spends his days in composing "something new." Oh, how hard Billy hits off the "times"! Who dare look at a "water-fall," after hearing Billy, without a smile? Billy is very broad;

too broad—vulgar. Billy's vulgarity has a zest for some of the thin-blooded old rascals who go there to ogle those poor dancing girls. These are " 'ard, very 'ard of 'earin, them old fellows"—they are forever poking the ribs of their younger acquaintances for the last "thing" Billy got off.

To say that the negro minstrelsy of 444 is equalled nowhere in the city, is not saying much in a city where cork and wool is done to death. 444 is no blessing to the metropolis. To say that it is low, that its actors are vulgar, that it is corruption itself, is truth. It's enough of it to add, that even a woman of the town would not enter its portals at night as a spectator of its obscene revels.

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## CHAPTER V.

### A COCK PIT.

THE brutality that showed its hideous head during the July riots had long sucked its bloody nourishment in the God-forsaken and gin-haunted district of Avenue A. Here was its favored and foul den; here that the savage mob recruited swimmingly. It was here that the avenging regulars captured such an extensive armory of military equipments. It was here that the besotted fiends danced around a poor, crucified negro, and spattered their own hearthstones with the brains of another, crushing his skull with jagged-edged pavement stones. One shudders as he walks through here at night-fall with such cruel traditions cursing it, and the sight of a friendly Metropolitan is as welcome as the dawn of day. It is natural to suppose, consequently, that the denizens of this uninviting and squalid quarter still have a weakness for anything in the brutal line, and that their popular excitement is not alone the pouring down their halter-itching gullets the cheap rum of the neighborhood. Alas! for dog bating and cock fighting, family rows, chewing choice bits off their neighbors' noses, gouging the eyes of their helpless females, tramping on bleeding faces the signatures of their nail-studded brogans, this home of the wild Irish is an active gymnasium. It was in one of the low grogeries with which this locality is festered that the scenes which we are about to delineate took place.

Mike Lynch (for such we will name him,) is its landlord—a full-blooded Connaught man and an ex-city official, a roving politician, a foreman of the late fire department, a graduate of the college on that little isle at the foot of Fifty-first street, E. R., a practical prize fighter, and, in the eyes of all "roughdom," a "bully boy" generally.

"Pure Bonded Liquors," in huge letters a yard high, stare lyingly over the portals of Mike's groggery. A hundred black bottles and numerous dusty demijohns are ranged on the many shelves of the windows. The lower panes of these windows, as well as those in the doors, are whitewashed, and render the scene within invisible to the eyes of passers-by. The old building is about two stories

high, and as it has been settling for years, the time for its final crash upon the glassware of the rumseller is dawning. Perhaps the rotten old frame is treasuring up its lowering wrath to break forth on the consummation of some future satanic revel more wicked than its predecessors. Entering the narrow doors, you find yourself in a low-ceiling room, very close and dark. The walls on the left are well barricaded with stupendous casks, highly varnished, and girdled with black, freshly-painted hoops. At the faucets of this grove of hogsheads stand copper gallon measures, rusty and slimy, swarming with flies and reeking with the odor of alcohol. A long bar on the right runs the depth of the room, and its bright slab is a solitary, carefully-polished oasis in this desert of dirt and rust. On it stands a heavy-plaited pitcher, a tumbler-rack with an assortment of glassware, a big sanded box, like a stone trough, for matches; a square box for segars, and a pewter urn for hot water, well dented with the shots of flying tumblers and skimming decanters. Behind the slab are portraits of George and Martha Washington (what a satire on patriotism!) the Fire Zouaves at Bull Run—highly colored, especially the shirts of the Zoo-Zoo's—and the sable steeds of the famous Black Horse Cavalry; a little clock in the belly of a plaster sailer, two of Kehoe's clubs, a pile of "fine cut" and "solace" in clean silver wrappers, and a dozen goblets, on the bottoms of which are shriveling a dozen jaundiced lemons. This counter is divided at the centre with a wide green screen, serving the double purpose of screening the back door of the grocery and announcing the coming race on the Fashion Course, or the card of some ambitious individual soliciting suffrages. A few pictures, cheaply framed and of the meanest kind, swing crookedly from rusty nails. A dozen chairs, set against the wall, complete the furniture; these last are firmly secured to the floor, as Mike's patrons, when excited, have an itching for hurling anything lying around loose, whether it be a chair or a hogshead. Behind the bar, in a red fire-shirt and black pants, stands Mike, hands in pockets, swinging on his toes, swaying the heavy seal of a broad gold chain until it clinks against the counter in harmony with the clock—something characteristic with Lynch when anticipating anything unusual. His head is that of a modern gladiator in all its animal development—round as a bullet, close shaven as a Puritan's, with a straight line of scalp across the low forehead. Two hollows over his eyebrows, like a death's head thinly veiled with flesh; eyes small and green with a savage fire, moistened a little with the fumes of bad whisky; nose short, pinched at the end and broken in the middle, for the bridge was not strong enough to carry over the "plug" of a certain heavy "bunch of fives"; cheek bones acute as a skeleton's; chin round and hard, like the heel of a wooden shoe—the only good-humored feature in the whole gallery. In the wide roll of his flannel shirt you behold a round, sinewy neck, like half a foot of fluted iron column—swelling painfully when the blood surges with passion.

From the landlord we turn to the assembly. It's a gallery of mild phizes. Hang-dog faces of newly-fledged thieves; hardened rogues; souls that have blood on them; dirt-begrimed menders of the highway, their faces burning with coarse, sandy whiskers, dried and wrinkled as a palm-leaf fan, their tough skins impervious to the

flush of blood or the gleams of intelligence. Hod carriers, their sparse, grey locks matted with mortar, from yellow-stained lips squirting tobacco juice at their big, luminous feet, clogged with white lime. Young roughs, haggard with the furrows of dissipation worming through body and soul, livid with foul blood and pitted with small pox. Old men, silvered with hoary locks, childish and sunken faced, sharp chinned, grinning with toothless gums. They are a motley-dressed band. Frieze coats, very threadbare and tattered; corduroy pants, greasy and well worn; seedy black coats, with great sweeping tails like the wings of vampyres; black pants, glossy and painfully tight—the habiliments of an old Jew's stock taking an airing.

Eight o'clock is the hour appointed for the entertainment, and as it lacks several minutes yet, there is a mutual offering of smothered curses at the slowness of the little clock in the plaster sailor's belly. Other roughs, more wretched and rum-eaten even than these anxious waiters, now stagger and saunter in. Eight o'clock strikes, and Mike takes a key from a rusty nail and a match or two from the big sanded box, and disappears through the back door. The crowd fall in line, and press against its panels. They make way, however, for several young bloods; these have mysterious humps between their breasts and coat sleeves, and are swallowed up by the mysterious back room. Through the key-hole comes frequent crowing. It's not the clear clarion of chanticleer feeling the first glow of the morning sun, but a sterner, harder cry—the crow of blooded chickens, reared for a sanguinary combat. At last the noise and the light gush through a quickly-opened door, and the back room as quickly swallows up the impatient spectators.

It's the back yard of the old groggery, cheaply enclosed. Cheap lithographs of gigantic roosters and sore-eyed bull terriers hang here and there. Rough, improvised benches, elevated as they radiate from the ring, form standing places, rather than seats, when the sport commences. The ring is strewed with tan, and entered by a little wicket gate. At this gate stand the three wicked-eyed youths with those mysterious lumps growing out of their sides. Mike has left his fiery hydrant to the care of a juvenile barkeeper. He sits in a chair at the wicket gate; under the full glare of the spitting gas-jets, like a weak edition of Nero, sits this scantily-fleshed Death's head, puffing his rank weed. An impatient round of stamping is a signal not to be offended; one of the wicked-eyed youths is relieved of his hump, and a sprightly little red and black game cock leaps upon the tan. He shakes his ruffled feathers, stretches his full length, and salutes the ring of eager faces with a shrill, clarion crow. With his battle cry of defiance, behold the little game cock in his full fighting armor! His scarlet comb is trimmed close to the skull; his feathers are plucked, and he seems almost ashamed of his apology for a tail. A sharp spur of steel glitters from his right leg—a murderous little bayonet. His little bead eyes scintillate with a cruel fire. Mike takes him in his hands, and leaning his elbows on his knees, nods to another individual with a draped hump. The pack of this last pedlar is a small fowl nearly all red, barberized and caparisoned like his opponent. His owner does not let him touch the tan, however, but holds him opposite the fowl Mike is



loosely supporting. Bully Hector and sturdy Ajax cast defying glances; since they left their mother's roost their little gill of cock's blood never surged so wickedly. Their small eyes flash out fire; their necks writhe and twist, like a snake's body before darting on the paralyzed bird he has charmed. The audience crowd upon the front row; the front row gives way, and leaps upon the tanned battle ground; they know no rules or regulations, that wild herd, panting for a sight of the spurting blood of these gallant little cocks.

The defiance of Mike's brows—the "fall back, now, and bed—d to you"—are heeded no more than a barrier of the chicken's feathers. There's a very little space left now for the combat, and you squeeze in with this gang of outlaws to be fortunate enough to get a sight of the cruel sport. There's a flutter, a scream almost human, and the gallant games are at it; the fowl duel [excuse the pun,] has commenced fairly. They look equally matched in might, and not very disproportionate in size. They parry, they thrust, they go at it coolly and scientifically, as if trying each other's strength or feeling for weak points, like their wicked examplars in a "mill." There! cool deliberation serves no longer; their few ounces of fighting blood is fairly up. The tan and feathers fly like autumn leaves, and in the mingled mist flash the bright, deadly gaffs. They leap in the air, now one higher than the other; they bury their sharp bills and gripe with their strong feet; frenzied, electrified, with a mutual hate goading them on, they battle fiercer and fiercer each moment. The wild crowd are breathless; the cruel blood curdles around their cold hearts, their faces pale, their eyes start from their sockets and grow green and luminous as basilisks'. Their own wild passions seem incarnated in that pair of feathered creatures.

There is a sudden cessation now; the fury of the little storm is over. That little cry, and the sharp gaff of the red cock pierces the heart of his antagonist, and the red blood is staining the golden talma that the poor victim sported in the rays of the morning's sun. O! how it chilled us, that faint, wild, cold scream, as the fated steel went home! One dreamed it not possible for a poor little game to give forth such a death-knell. They toss the warm carcase of the dead warrior aside, and the shouts over the dizzy, weak little victor are deafening. O! spare him further battle; be content with his little laurels! Alas! his task is not finished; the bounds demand more murder from this feathered Spartacus.

They soon set before him a fresh rival. Half blinded, his feathery plumes matted with blood, he reels, then with a desperate courage, that provokes even from these hardened breasts a merit of applause, he hurls the full force of his remaining strength in one fell blow. He is again a victor! The bets had gone heavy against him, he looked so weak and spent when this fresh rival touched the tan. The curses of the losers were as uproarious as the pleased winners' shouts. This now gave way to a mutual admiration for the plucky little bird. His owner takes him to his breast; his life-blood stains his shirt bosom; but, alas! his beady eyes are glazing fast, his little neck can no longer hold up his scarlet crest; he'll never crow another defiant challenge. Away goes his still warm body, flung upon the pile of his victims—the little cock will fight no more!

Cruel sport—cruel savages! Who wonders at their fiendishness—their wanton brutality on those hot July nights, with the heavens red with their incendiaries? Have we forgotten of the poor creatures, whose only crime was a dusky skin, fleeing from their bloody clubs and stones, crying hopelessly even to us to save them? These fiends are the only patrons of this cock pit, thank God!

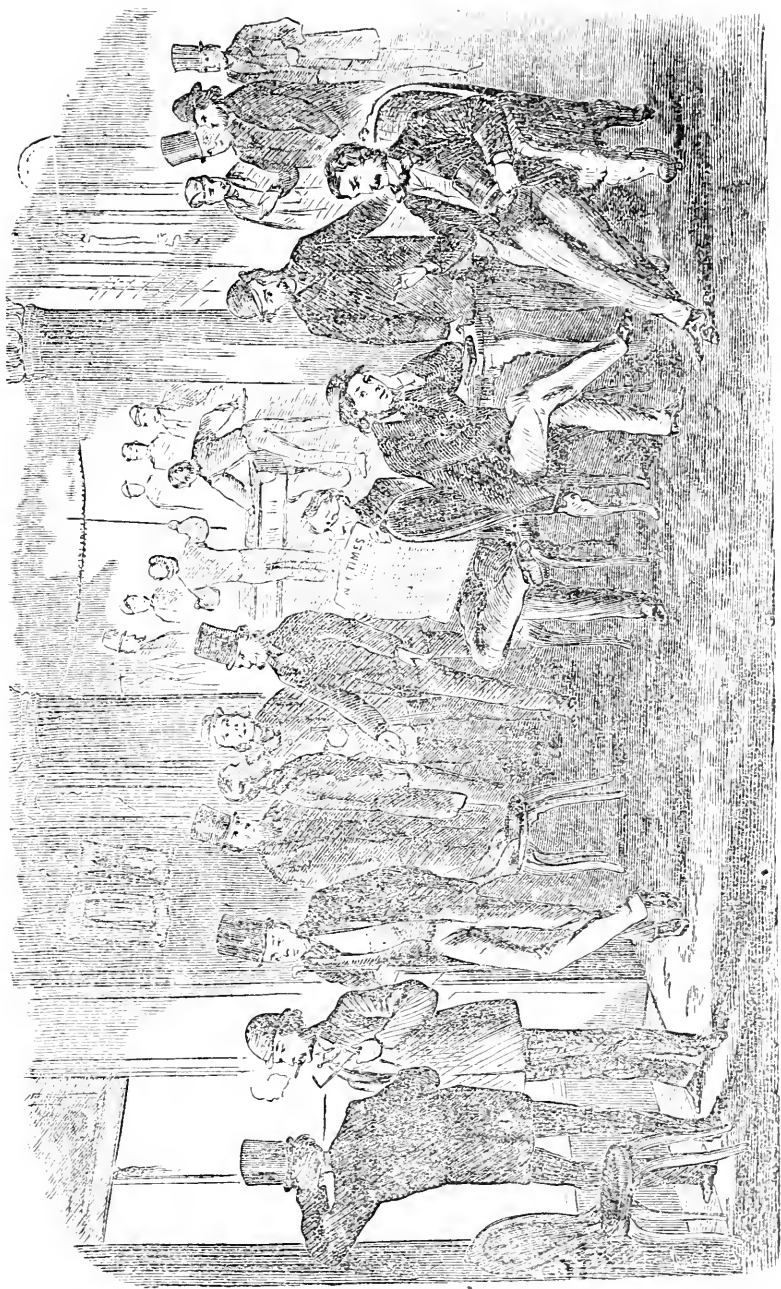
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## CHAPTER VI.

### AT A FREE AND EASY.

THE love of music is not the monopoly of a certain class. The sweating crowd of a minstrel hall, stamping and whistling for a repetition of that "bully song," dashing away now and then, with horny fists, a glistening tear, appreciate a plaintive ballad or a well sung aria with all the zest of a white-gloved audience at the Academy of Music. We have witnessed the pea-nut-munching-gods of the Old Bowery pit, those sharp, little news-vending mercuries, its inveterate patrons, calm their restless natures until their dirt-begrimed faces beamed with a soul-lit radiance, as some childish warbler chaunted in her feeble treble the song of "Little Eva." They tell us that in the public schools on the East side, and down by the docks of the lower wards, the young pupils roll out more lustily their music tasks, and with a purer relish, than their more dainty little friends in the higher walks of life. The ballad dealers at the Park gates, with their five hundred yards of penny songs, find many patrons, and the new melodies of the vagrant piper and the itinerant grinder are re-echoed from every old tenement. While the squalid offspring of the great unwashed, tramping on the heels of the military bands, regale themselves with cheap music, their fathers and brothers stroll into the alehouses, and smoke their black pipes at the evening harmonies. These musical gatherings hold their conclaves in all parts of the town; in Hester street, in the cellars of the Bowery, and in the deserted family mansions of Houston street.

Longing for a radical change after a surfeit of imported Italian lungs at the Academy, leaving a prima donna fairly entombed beneath a mound of expensive boquets, we strolled down Broadway on a certain Saturday night of the past—for it's on a Saturday night that these vocal entertainments present themselves in all their glory. Leaving the gloomy towers of St. Thomas' church in the night shadows, we passed into that Babylonish highway, baptised by the Metropolitan Acton, "God-forsaken Houston street." Groping along through knots of gamblers, fallen virtues, and blackguards generally, bestowing honest admiration upon a solitary brave metropolitan, fidgeting nervously the leather thongs of his hardy club, we came at last beneath the rays of a sickly gas jet, windy and asthmatical in its tomb of red transparency. On the outside of this sanguinary lantern, in a reflex of white letters, were the magic words, "Free and Easy." A party, decidedly the worse from liquor, and none the better from the potent sway of melody, were shuffling down the



steps of the building, to the great dismay of a score of the *lazzaroni* jostled from the platform, upon which they were exhibiting their sightless eyes, maimed limbs, and emaciated babes sucking from marble breasts. The blasted hopes of a few pennies set the vagrant crew cursing and mumbling, and it made one shudder, the echo of those shouted oaths following in the wake of the zig-zag marchers.

But let us enter. Wedging through the barricade of beggars, we found ourselves crossing the threshold of a recent family mansion, now transformed into a house of public entertainment. The hall is blocked off at the foot of the stairs, and its back passage is devoted to the purposes of a bar. A little window in the centre of the partition, with a walnut shelf, stares you in the face. This is for the convenience of the females from the neighboring tenements, who stroll in frequently for a quart or pint of beer. Some of these customers of the other sex linger at this little hole, or poke their muffled faces in at the door and gateway, carolling snatches of the songs that their lords and masters are applauding so lustily. Across the hall to the right, we enter what was once the front parlor of the late residence. The mantles and fire grates are still there. Here are a few tables covered with torn and beer stained papers, some dilapidated chairs, prints of England's prince and Queen, George Washington, the American flag, and an aged clock; while the front of the bar, like the booth of a cheap Johnny, stares at you with all its trinkets of glass, plated and earthen mugs, polished beer pumps, big casks, rusty pistols, stuffed owls, augur-bored targets, and a hundred other gimcracks in the line of a barkeeper's souvenirs. In this frame was the body of a short-haired, low forehead, broad-shouldered, shirt-sleeved bartender, sweating and puffing with the manual labor of pumping beer into an unlimited stock of small glasses. This room opens into another, longer and worse ventilated. The walls of this are hung on every side with the lithographs of muscular bruisers, who are taking air-baths in short clothes, diminutive black and tan pups, sore-mouthed, lean-car-cassed white bull dogs; wiry racers with blotches of white to portray their glossy hides, and a portrait of Sherman, unshaved, eating the corner of a main-sail collar. A long table, like a walnut back-bone, runs down the centre of the floor, flanked by rows of stout stools with two high chairs at either end. On a raised platform against the wall stands a gurgling piano, ring-wormed by wet beer glasses, and loaded with piles of mutilated sheet music. The floors are deeply sanded, and the crunching and shuffling of feet is like a mass meeting of jig-dancers.

Both rooms are crowded, and the stench of fetid breaths, bad tobacco, and sour beer is intolerable. An old Scotchman, with a nose worn out with snuff, three sandy-headed boys, selected for their easy locomotion, worry the barkeeper, drench coat-collars, and break glasses, in their ardor to serve out the beer to the thirsty crowd. Every seat is occupied, nay even the window sills and corners of the piano. The audience was the most motley set we have beheld since the July riots. Low-browed, thick-necked, small-eyed, nose-worn bruisers—several front teeth gone, slashed and pitted cheeks, slit lips and scarred chins. Gamblers flashily dressed, carefully shaved, haggard eyes, wickedly pale, running great risks with

their diamond pins and pendent watch guards. Weak, over-grown boys, sipping even the flat beer with a shudder, and their lips twitching with the rank juice of cheap segars. Old men, their bald heads glistening like snuff bladders, bending stiff, bloodless ears with horny hands to catch the warmth of some low song. Hackmen, carmen, firemen, greasy machinists, dry goods drummers—men in blue flannel, in red flannel; in light coats, in threadbare coats, in all sorts of coats. Your regular New York rough, in his high-peaked black felt hat, his long-tailed coat, his light shiny black pants—the sailor, the volunteer.

Ratty-tap-tap—down comes the wooden mallet of a small, dark-looking little man in one of the big chairs, the president; the tall fellow with the handsome black eyes is the vice, and has thrown his left leg over the arm of the chair at the foot of the table.

"Order, gents, if you please," says the little president, with a voice like the roar of the biggest bull in Bashen: "McLangley, if you please, gents."

Ratty-tap-tap!

The roar of the turbulent assembly has ceased. Up pops a little man and elbows his way to the side of the jingling piano. The crowd pat him on the shoulders in passing. All eyes are upon the little man perched on the edge of the platform; he has one hand on the piano—a tableaux after the style of Webster tickling the bust of Washington in that print over there. McLangley is the prince of ballad singers. He has had the run of the minstrel halls and the concert saloons and has now gone down to a Free and Easy. He is quite an oddity. Short, thick-set, with a very pale face, a very red nose, and a very moist eye. His pug proboscis is very radiant indeed with the true colors of old King Bourbon, to whom he is a loyal subject. His pale forehead by contrast with his flaming trumpet is a redeeming feature, and his mouth has a humorous twitch that is a capital auxiliary to a descriptive ballad. His hair is as black and crispy as a Jew's. After slinging his old slouched hat upon the pile of soiled music, he winks to the pianist, who knows by instinct Jemmy's choice, and then carols away melodiously. He is perfectly self-possessed as he flings his notes over the sea of amused faces. His choruses are well known, and as husky voices take them up, he rests from his labors and chats with the youth at the musical instrument. He, too, is a marvel—that lively pianist. Every air is at his finger's end, never weary of playing; the heat of the room, the suffocation of bad breath and tobacco annoys him not. With a weed in the corner of his mouth, and a glass of gin at his elbow, he rattles away before the songs, through the songs and between the songs. He is accompanied by a French horn, whose breath is rather short, and who winds his bugle spasmodically.

When Jemmy had finished, the impatient crowd bellowed for the song of the "Hot Corn Girl"—a mythical little creature, "who lived in Baxter street, in an aul-ley." Jemmy did it inimitably. In his low notes he is a bit husky—a fault of his chronic dryness, which no amount of gin can dampen. A latent humor still clings to this rummy old cove. His Irish blood tells potently in his rendering of the "rich brogue," the roll of which is not equalled by a Brougham or a Barney Williams. There was something deeply

interesting in the mutual approbation that the old chap awakened by his funny songs ; a dissenting expression would have gone hard with the boldest. One was reminded of the rough old clansmen of Scotia, when the feeble bard, striking the strings of his harp, charms down the hellish passions and the wild frenzies their deep-drinking orgies had culminated in.

Jemmy's song ended, and all the noises out of Pandemonia never equalled the stamping, the cat-calling, the jingling of glasses, that followed. As the entertainment waned, the copious draughts of gin and beer which had been working silently, showed strongly in flushed faces and blearing eyes. The climax of a rousing carousal was dawning. Even Jemmy's nose was a shade redder. Timid volunteer ventured to do a bit in the musical line. The ridiculous exhibition of a gawky youth, with big feet and club like fingers, illustrating the song of a sewing machine operator, was the burlesque of burlesques. The sentiment of the songs now were very coarse and amorous. At last a ponderous countryman, half-seas over, awkward as a colt, his big bumpkin face radiant as a fire balloon, staggered to the platform and ventured a song. It was spiey fun to the more maudlin drinkers. It set the taps a-flowing, it nearly exhausted the old Scotchman and the three sindy-headed boys.

"Chorus, gents, if you please," shouted the chair.

"Chorus, gents, if you please," echoed the "vice ;" and the chorus to the larking farmer was rolled out with a vengeance.

At this stage of the evening's revels, things took a rather rough turn. The songs were more indecent and decidedly worse sung. One fellow, right royally drunk, flung his huge carcass across one of the small tables. The glasses crashed and snapped, the table creaked, split, and came to the floor, and over its wreck rolled the drunken mass, shoving spittoons, upsetting stools, and kicking in a thicket of shins and knee-pans. The scent of a brawny row was too apparent. In vain did the tireless pianist jingle his loudest ; in vain did the chairman hoist the now disjointed Jemmy McLangley upon his liquor-soaked pins for another oily song to send over the troubled sea.

We willingly floated out with the pressing crowd, and as we snuffed the night air, shoals of jolly fellows made the night hideous with their roarings to the pale stars and the spectral lamp-posts.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### THE DANCE HOUSES.

IF Terpsichore, the heathen goddess who was supposed to preside over the gay and festive dance, had been permitted to visit the temples devoted to her worship in the low slums of New York, she would probably have hung up her fiddle and retired from the profession in disgust. It is along the river fronts of the city, and in the streets tributary to them, that these nurseries of depravity, licentiousness, murder, and all manner of atrocity, chiefly have their location. They abound more upon the Eastern verge of the lower

part of the city than elsewhere, the most notorious of them being situated in Water and Cherry streets. It is in these streets, chiefly that seafaring men find a temporary shelter in the numerous sailors, lodging-houses with which the quarter seethes. The crimps have their strong-hold here, and Jack's hard-earned wages and well-fought-for prize money is the in-flowing capital upon which these sharks carry on their infamous calling. If you walk the place by day—and it would not be advisable for you to do so by night—you will observe the nautical character of the signs and names of the various places of entertainment. "Neptune's Retreat," invites the mariner to repose at one corner, and, over the way, yonder, a very rickety-looking crib informs you by its sign-board that it rejoices in the big name of the "Oceanic Arbor." There is a "Sailor's Rest," where many a poor fellow has doubtless paid dearly for his night's repose, and "The Harpoon" strongly suggests to the beholder the possibility of a lodger being occasionally mistaken for a "right whale," and "nailed to the counter" with the terrible fish spear, from which the den takes its name.

Jack ashore has long been notable for his tendency to indulge in the lively dance. Who has not heard of, nay, seen, a sailor's horn-pipe, if not in real life, at least on the stage? So it is that, in most seaport towns, Jack's taste has been catered to by the establishment of the class of tavern known as the "dance house." In no city in the world, perhaps, are those places of resort more rife, more dissolute, and more dangerous, than they are in the city of New York, and as but few "outsiders" ever have a chance of visiting them in safety, a brief account of them will doubtless be acceptable to many readers.

We will go together then, as it were—the reader and the writer—into the low district of the town drained by Water street, and have a look at things there after dark. Not alone do we go, however, my country friend, because, if you and I happen to be ever so athletic even, and armed all the way down the spine, that would serve us in but little stead, in case of a "difficulty," unless we had with us, as guide and companion, one of the recognized officers of the law. By application to the proper authorities, we, as members of the journalistic fraternity, are promptly provided with the services of an intelligent and thoroughly posted detective, with whom, gathering much information as we walk along, we soon arrive in the heart of the dangerous region. But our detective friend, although a bold man, is also a discreet one. He has had his little experiences. Esying the green light of a police station in one of the narrow by-ways, he makes for it, and presently returns with a reinforcement of a very smart looking officer, attired, like himself, in plain citizen's costume. He would like, he says, to have a handy patrolman to back him in case of trouble, and there was no telling but such might happen at any moment.

Presently we stop before a dingy den with a lantern on the door, and a sound of shabby music within. We enter the rickety portal, and find ourselves at once in a long, low apartment, bare of any kind of furniture excepting the benches that stand against the walls. At the farther end of the room there is a bar, not different in its general aspect from the bars of most low grogeries, and behind it

there stands an ugly fellow of sinister aspect, who has control of the abominable poisons that are there retailed. Placards hung up behind the bar inform the customers that "all drinks are 10 cents," and, furthermore, that "all dances are 20 cents"—which is a proof of the great value attached by slum society to the latter luxury. There does not happen to be any dance going on at the moment of our entrance, so let us pause a moment and take note of the surroundings. Next the bar, and in a line with it, though elevated a foot or two above it, is a sort of pulpit, in which are seated two musicians—one of whom tunes feebly the notes of a wheezy violin, the other is a stout mulatto, who has rings in his ears, blue and red anchors tattooed upon his gingerbread-colored hands, and bears other indications about him of being at off-times a follower of the sea; the instrument upon which he performs is a tambourine—and you will observe, as we extend our investigation into other dance houses, that such are the simple orchestral elements in every one of them—a fiddle and a tambourine.

Walk up toward the bar, now, along the sanded floor, and take a glance round the walls as we go. There are about fifty people in the room, most of them seated on the benches along the walls. Twenty or so of these are women. They represent the lowest type of the "dolly-mop," or sailor's courtesan. Not the "Poll," or "Sue," mind you, of the stage sailor, with whom he leaves his likeness and a lock of his hair when he goes afloat, but hard, bitter haridans, who rob him when they have a chance, drinking with him and dancing with him in a cold-blooded, business-like way, entirely devoid of the mirth usually attributed to the partners of those who "go down into the sea in ships." They are all dressed in a style of tawdry finery that is repulsive. Immense "waterfalls," made apparently of horses' tails, sit like poultices on the napes of their necks. These appendages are profusely decorated with faded ribbons and sown all over with spangles. Short skirts, frequently of bright tartan patterns, appear to be quite the thing here, showing a good deal of soiled petticoat and cotton stocking. Some of the women have little bells attached to their boots or the bottom of their skirts, which make a wild, savage jingle when they dance. Never, in any one of the places, as we go, do we see one woman bearing the least pretension to good looks. If any of them were born fair of feature, all trace of the natural beauty has long since been obliterated by the attrition of their life. The grooves in which licentious passion and crime run to and fro in the mind, have their counterparts in the lines that mark the face. Paint is laid on an inch thick, but it cannot conceal the expression of bestial depravity that characterises these wretched creatures in every case. Can you conceive of men brutal enough to be fascinated by such stagnant syrens as these? And yet there are—and so much the worse for humanity.

The masculine element here does not consist exclusively of Jack Tars. Many of the rough-looking men seated on the benches, or drinking at the bar, are red-shirted fellows who probably make their living in some way as 'longshoremen, while some among them are pretty well known to the police as river thieves—coast pirates in a small way, who commit their depredations among the shipping at the wharves. They are a hard-looking set, wearing, mostly very



slouching, seamless woollen caps, with tartan borders and distorted peaks. By some instinct, they all seem to be aware of the presence of officers, although the latter are in citizens' clothes. They scowl a good deal, but keep quiet, huddling close up to the women who sit beside them, and with whom they are drinking and interchanging a good deal of "chaff."

Our guide now introduces us specially to the keeper of the place, whose hand, you will remark, as he grasps yours, is of a very coarse and horny texture. He is a fellow of great volubility of tongue, and likes to pass himself off as having once been a regular pugilist, a matter open to some doubt, as we subsequently learn. There is no doubt, however, that he has made a large sum of money by his unclean business, and could retire to-morrow, upon a competent income, if he had a mind to do so. But these fellows never have. They have no resources with which to divert their muggy minds did they retire from business; and, as their habits of life do not favor longevity, they generally cease to encumber the earth at a comparatively early age. For the greater part, their children continue the business, although there are known instances of persons now moving in wealthy circles, whose parentage has been traced to the crimp dens and dance houses of the river-side slums.

On visiting these places it is absolutely necessary to patronize the bar. Not exactly necessary to drink, indeed; for, having had one taste of the liquor poured out for you, nothing is less likely than that you will be in a hurry to drain the maddening cup. It is a wonder how people can drink that stuff three times and live. The proprietor joins us in the libation, at the invitation of the detective, whom he knows quite well. Then, having a very keen eye to business, he tells us that although drinking is a thing to which he has no positive objection, yet he is conscious that dancing is his *forte*. He could not live without dancing, he says, because it is the only kind of exercise which his business allows him to enjoy, and he is a strictly business man. "All dances 20 cents," says the card hanging behind the bar, and you may readily guess that it is not altogether for the love of dancing that the proprietor now orders the music to strike up, and busies himself in the formation of a set. He makes great efforts to induce you and me to select partners from among the chaste syrens along the walls, but we "don't see it," you know, although the officers think it might be a good thing to do, once in a way, on conciliatory principles and "for the good of the house." Indeed, one of them puts his principles into practice, and leads out from her retirement by the wall a tall, square-shouldered "ripper," with very decided lines about the corners of her horse-shoe mouth, and a badly-disguised extravasation of blood around her left eye. The proprietor, who is in his shirt-sleeves, leads out two or three, and many of the men around also select their partners, and presently all are mixed up together in a sort of cotillion—a quadrille with a sketch of waltz in it. The sounds of the fiddle and tambourine come but feebly through the thumping and shuffling of feet now, which is not surprising when you consider that most of the men wear cowskin boots, and use them with considerable vigor, too.

The dances are repeated very often, as new-comers keep dropping in. On this occasion everything is so quiet that you ask the

detective whether "difficulties" are not of rather frequent occurrence in the dance-houses, and how it is that this assembly is so harmonious?

"Depends entirely upon who comes in," replies that cool-headed functionary. "Any moment now, while we are sitting here, a man may come in who has an account to settle with one of the blue-shirts or red-shirts, or a spite against the bar-keeper, or against the proprietor as like as not, and then it's all knife and pistol, and somebody's sure to get hurt. In many cases some one gets shot who has nothing to do with the row. It wouldn't be so much matter if the fellows only hit each other."

"How do you manage to make your authority known in such cases?"

"By showing this," replied the officer, producing his shield from his trouser's pocket; "but it don't always have the effect. We must not forget to fetch these along besides," and he just allows you the least peep at a small club concealed inside his coat, and a revolver cunningly stowed away where he can readily put his hand upon it.

"It must be a difficult thing, in a free fight, to determine who struck the first blow, or who fired the fatal shot. How about that?"

"Come along," said the detective, "and I'll show you a house where there was one of those mixed fights only a few nights ago."

Once more we tread the unclean, haunted street, until we arrive at a red lamp, on which is painted the name Antonio Antonelli. It is the beacon light of a dance house, not differing materially from the last in its general features, but chiefly patronized by Italian and Spanish sailors, and outcast foreign rascals of many queer lingoos, who are engaged about the wharves. Here the women seemed to be of several types and races—Spanish, Italian and German—the latter, perhaps, predominating. There is a sprinkling of Irish among them, perhaps, but all details of character are merged into one debauched type, as is usually the case with the abandoned creatures who crowd the cribs of great seaport towns.

"See that Dutch girl there!" said the detective, irreverently, "the one with the net full of yellow hair hanging on the back of her neck," and he pointed to a German fraulein of thirty-five or so, short of stature, and of extremely square build. "Well, it was about her that the difficulty happened. A Portuguese sailor took her away from the man she was dancing with—a South American greaser, I guess—and when the first knife was drawn, there were twenty flashing in a jiffy. The Portuguese had his thumb severed right down to the wrist, and no one can tell whose knife did it. One of the fellows had a long knife driven into his back, and he died the next day. When the police came in, the row was just over, because nearly every man engaged in it was down from loss of blood. The whole houseful was taken into custody, but none could positively say who struck the fatal blow, and so the only thing that came of it was that the rowdies, who were all seamen, were sent on board the ships to which they belonged."

"Are there many robberies committed in these cribs?"

"More than are ever heard of outside the place; drugged liquor is the commonest way of doing it. A girl will find out, easy, whe-

ther a sailor has lately been paid off, or is worth so much prize-money, and has it about him ; nothing easier than to put him asleep, and a robbed sailor has about as much idea how to go about recovering his property as a four year old child. He takes another drink when he wakes up, if he has money enough left to pay for it, and then goes back to his ship, and gets into just the same sort of scrape again the next time he comes back."

And now we go to three or four other cribs of character similar to the ones just described, most of them having attached to them a story of some hideous outrage or crime. There are drunken men in several of them, but stupidly drunk beyond the power of creating any dangerous disturbance. Probably their liquor has been drugged, and if so, it might not be a bad plan to pass a law prohibiting any other kind of liquor from being served out in the dance houses and all such dens.

In one of the places, the tambourinist is a genius in his way. He is an uncommonly fine-looking fellow, with a handsome, open face, and has been a man-of-war's man, as we learn. His mastery over the simple disk of sheep-skin, with which he gives time to the feet of the dancers, is really wonderful, and he takes such delight in the instrument, himself, that even during the pauses between the sets he holds it close to his ear, and brings soft purring sounds from it that remind him, perhaps, of the far-off breakers on some tropical lee shore. One would think that the man might do better than thrum parchment in a sink of iniquity ; but the detective says that he is a half-simple fellow, who cares nothing where he is so long as people give him enough to eat and drink, and let him go back to sea whenever he has a mind to. Better for him to be at the bottom of it than here.

It would hardly occur to you, perhaps, that there could be the least bit of romance connected with the inmates of the dance houses. Could we only know all, there might be more of that than is suggested to us by the low and vulgar scene. Yet there is no class of society so low, according to the police records, as to be destitute of its occasional spice of vicissitude. Only a few years ago, an advertisement appeared in some English and American papers, inquiring for the nearest of kin to some person who had died leaving a large estate. Long and patient investigation, such as is exercised only by solicitors in the hopes of a large reward, disclosed the fact that the heiress to the property was, at the time, an inmate of one of the low dance-cribs in Cherry street, or in some other street traversing that obscene precinct of the city. The thing was established beyond a doubt, and the history of it is as follows : The girl was of a very respectable Irish family, the branch of it to which she belonged, however, having fallen into decay. They had gone through the Encumbered Estates Court, and, with the small amount of money that accrued to them from the sales, had emigrated to America, leaving behind them one daughter—a beautiful and accomplished girl—who was the governess in an English family of wealth and position. From some circumstance or another, not now remembered by the writer, this young lady resigned or lost her situation, and soon after sailed for New York, with the intention of joining her relatives, who had taken up their abode in a Western state. She trav-

eled alone, and in rather humble guise, for her purse was very scanty. Lonely as she was, poor girl, it was easy for her to grow intimate with a male protector. The first mate of the vessel was attentive to her, and she was grateful for his good offices. He was a libertine, and, on arriving at New York, he decoyed her under promise of marriage, and effected her ruin. It is a fact that when a well-educated woman falls, she falls faster than one accustomed to a rougher life. Waking or sleeping, her earlier associations are ever before her, and the burden of life would be intolerable but for drink. And so the hapless victim of the scoundrel mariner took to that as her last resource, and she was the most blasphemous and hardened inmate of the crib to which they traced her after so long a search. There was no possibility of making her comprehend the news they had for her, because her mind was utterly warped and withered from drink; and she died of *delirium tremens* in one of the city hospitals a few days after, without ever knowing that she was mistress of money enough to have built a convent or founded a Magdalen asylum.

Such are the 'longshore dance houses of the city, but more in the heart of it there flourish others of a different stamp, so far as the type of inmates goes, and also differing in general appearance and arrangement. Some of these are attached to pugilistic "drums," and such like places, to which an outsider would hardly attribute any establishment beyond the saw-dusted bar-room, in which beetle-browed characters congregate by day and night to drink strong liquors and discuss topics of the "ring." One of these resorts, which we have now in our mind's eye, is but a small crib to look at from the street, and when you enter it you will think, mayhap, that it does not take many customers of a night. Back of it, however, there is an extension, reached by a narrow, creaking stair, and having ascended this, you will probably find a very large crowd of both sexes assembled in a queer, irregular sort of ball-room. Bulkheads cross out here and there, and barriers and railings that seem to have no particular use, and every now and then you will find that you will have to go up or down steps to reach some part of the floor to which your attention is directed.

The crowd is of quite another order to that of the marine cribs. There are no partners provided by the house, and the women, who come in their shawls and bonnets, attended by their young men, appear to be generally respectable and well-behaved. What they are it would be hard for one "outside the ropes" to say. Ask your detective friend whether women of the town find their way hither, and he will probably respond by requesting your definition of a "woman of the town." Many of these females, however, are the mistresses of the half-pugilistic, half-pickpocket, kind of young fellows who swarm to the place. Some of them look so "decent," that it would be hard to think of them as frail, if fair, and you will fain set them down as sweethearts only; but it is to be feared that such cases are exceptionable, and the idea is a romantic one—for you. We can take our seats, carelessly, at any of the tables in the room, for the place is well watched, and disturbances do not often occur here; though that, as the detective said in the case of the 'long-shore dens, "depends upon who comes in." Waiters, or, in

some instances, waitresses, ask you what you will please to drink, and, if the liquor is not precisely up to the Delmonico standard, still it is not the absolute poison dealt out over the bar in the places we have just left. Doubtless there are a good many thieves in the place, and we are quite certain that your black-muzzled fellow with his felt hat slouched over his brows, was last seen by us in Essex Market police court, "with gyves upon his wrists." There is a space on the floor, here, dedicated to the demon of dance. The timbers of the place creak to the swaying of the dancers. The music is usually that of fiddles, destitute of the accompaniment of a tambourine.

Still another class of dance-houses is that exclusively devoted to the pastimes of the African race. About Wooster street and West Broadway, in the neighborhood of Canal street, several of these are in "full blast." Dancing is an amusement native to the light-hearted Ethiop, whose morals do not prohibit him, either, from his favorite enjoyment of gambling and the vices that follow in its train. Most of the negro dance-houses, then, are a combination of that sort of amusement with the gaming-table and the mysterious 4—11—44. Some frightfully depraved characters are to be seen in these places. The knife is used with great freedom by the negro, who seldom shows any fight unless he has "cutlery" about him—which he generally has. They fight among each other like wolves, but do not often interfere with people of the other color. Sometimes, in these dance-houses, you may see quadroon or mulatto women of immense physical proportions and rather good looks. Nor is it unusual to find in them specimens of female human nature bloated and distorted out of all semblance to humanity, and of intellect apparently but little superior to that of the so-called "lower animals."

Curious feats of ventriloquism are sometimes performed in these places of entertainment. The negro seems to have a gift in that way. Some years ago the writer heard one in a dance-house in the western section of the city, whose performance was really remarkable. His jingling of bells in his chest was such, that a suspicion might have arisen that he had swallowed some of the Swiss bell-ringers, and his concert of farm-yard sounds was quite a masterpiece in its way.

Well, it is late by the time we have finished our rounds. As we pass through a narrow street, on our way home, sounds of revelry are heard approaching, and the officers pause to listen. The revelers prove to be a few German stragglers, on their way from some "Harmony Hall."

"Only Dutchmen," said the detective; "*they* won't do much harm; but if they were Italians, now, or Irish, it would be quite another thing!"

Which was a pretty good comment, after all, on the nationalities that make up our mixed community.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE POLICE STATIONS.

NIGHT in the various Police stations of the city is a time of record for crimes, offences, miseries and horrors, as various in their kinds as the types of character and occupation that necessarily go to the making up of a great cosmopolitan community. It is at night that crime prowls, panther-like, in the darkened alleys and by-ways, ready, ever, for a spring upon its unsuspecting prey. Nor is night in the highways a season, merely, for the gay throng, the busy turmoil of carriages, and the dazzling glare of the gas-lit scrolls that blaze over the vestibules of the places of amusement. Along Broadway itself, from the Battery to far away up town, there flourish dens of crime in which the gambler, the rowdy and the harlot of cruel heart, carry on, nightly, their infernal orgies undisturbed, until some knife or pistol has done its bloody work. Then it is at night that the police make their periodical and somewhat spasmodic descents upon the places of ill repute ; and so it is that, night after night, the several stations are the scenes of strange and "sensational" dramas, representing phases of life and death, in which the actors may be said to belong to all classes of the community.

Let us take a round of the station-houses together, good reader—not necessarily in one night, of course, but every now and then for a while—until we have sifted the grain from many of them. Our experiences, you may depend upon it, will not vary, materially, from those which have fallen in the way of the present writer, many a time and oft.

You may know the Police station-house at night from a long way off, by the great green light that shines over the entrance-door—the jealous eye, as it were, that watches over the precinct during the dark hours. These establishments vary somewhat in the style of their fittings, according to the localities in which they happen to be situated. Enter some up-town one through the swinging door, and you will find yourself in a large and handsome room, along one side of which there runs a long counter or desk ; behind this sits the officer on duty, who registers and disposes of, for the night, all delinquents brought in. There is a space on one side of this, enclosed with an iron railing painted green, and within this the prisoners and complainants take their stand. All the woodwork is painted in imitation of oak. Behind where the officer sits is a book-case, containing several volumes of reference on subjects connected with the laws of the land. Off this apartment, there are several others for the accommodation of the force, and cells for the reception of detained prisoners are a necessary feature of the establishment. The whole place has a trim, well-aired and official appearance, though in winter it is too often heated to excess by large stoves. Some of the station-houses in the dirtier wards are not quite such stylish concerns as those in the upper quarters of the city. The atmosphere in which they fester seems to have affected their complexions a little, and they look mouldy and damp enough.

For the classes of crime on record in them, however, there is less to choose between the two than might generally be supposed.

We enter an up-town station-house, and find there that the detective attached to the precinct (each police precinct has one or two of its smartest officers detailed for detective duty,) has just come in with a prisoner whom he has been after for some time past, and whom he "spotted" to-day while riding in a Third avenue car. The prisoner is a rather low-sized, thick-set man, of dark complexion, with a black moustache, and the rest of his beard in a state of bluish stubble. He is well enough dressed, but has a seedy, hang-dog look, and the expression of his face is not improved by a very perceptible cast in one of his eyes. The complaint against him, on the present occasion is that, some weeks ago, he ingratiated himself with a stranger in the sitting-room of a third class Broadway hotel. There are very green people around everywhere, and this stranger was one of them, for he, already not quite sober, allowed his newly-found companion to treat him to farther refreshments at the bar of the house. Then they went out together to see the city sights, and the last thing complainant remembers of the little spree is that he woke up somewhere next morning minus four thousand dollars in bonds and greenbacks, his gold watch, and some articles of jewelry that were upon his person. He says that the prisoner drugged him, and that he was still partially conscious when his pockets were rifled. Prisoner is committed to the cells for to-night, to-morrow morning to be taken before the magistrate at one of the Police Courts. The detective knows him, and tells us what manner of rascal he is. To the "profession" and the police he is known as a "mean thief;" generally, he manages to get lodgings in the house of some widow woman, on whom he can readily impose; he introduces comrades in rascality there, until a portion of the house becomes a rookery of thieves. Their depredations are, for the most part, carried on outside, though a branch of their operations is to volunteer attending to the hall-door, by which means they get possession of money-letters and parcels addressed to respectable persons occupying the best rooms in the house. But what chiefly marks the "mean thief" as such is, that he is capable of defrauding and swindling his brother operators. The comrades, or "pals," selected by him are usually young and somewhat inexperienced hands. He persuades them to let him retain their share of an "operation," in order that he may invest it to their advantage; then he banks the funds on his own account, and when any of the others come down upon him for their plunder, he declares himself "dead broke," and swears that he doesn't know how he spent the money, but, anyhow, hain't a cent of it left. In this way, many a "mean thief" has managed to lay up a considerable sum of money, though he generally gets rid of it as easily as he made it—by gambling, or in some equally popular and fashionable way. The "mean thief" is an individual only, the class to which he belongs being most often that to which the "hotel thief" gives a denomination. New York fairly swarms with such rascals as these, and it would take more than double the number of detectives now in the force to keep a check upon their mysterious and widely ramified operations.

Now a gentleman enters with a very small complaint; he lives

but a few blocks away, and, as he was stepping over his threshold, found lying upon the steps a man either dead, or so drunk as to be entirely unconscious. Wasn't there a patrolman about, the sergeant on duty asks, to whom the gentleman could have applied for the removal of the body, dead or alive? "Not a patrolman to be seen," replied the gentleman: "waited ten minutes, and then came around to the station-house for help." A roundsman is sent out to look after the nuisance, and we join the party to learn the manner of proceeding in a case of the kind. When we arrive at where the body lies, across the steps of a hall-door, the roundsman gives a certain number of raps with his "locust" upon the sidewalk flags. This very soon brings a patrolman to the spot, to whom some objuratory observations are addressed by the roundsman. Patrolman expostulates by demanding to know whether he is supposed to be a bird, and capable, in that character, of occupying two places at once. Now the roundsman examines the body, turning it over on its back, so that the neighboring gas-lamps shed a ray upon the face. Body grunts under the operation; roundsman shakes body, saying, "nary a dead there, bnt drunk as h-ll; guess I'll wake him up!" With that he takes his locust and applies it briskly, in the manner of the bastinado, to the soles of the sleeper's feet. The effect is electrical; the sleeper starts into a recumbent position, and says, "le' me 'lone." The officers lift him up between them—he is a big returned soldier, "on a drunk"—and bear him to the station-house, where he is placed in the drunkard's place of detention for the night. Early in the morning he will be up, with several other "hard cases," before the magistrate at the Jefferson Market Police Court; there he will be lightly dealt with, partly because he is one of the country's defenders, and possibly because he has already suffered the loss of his pocket-book, containing the arrears of his pay, which was "hooked" from him by some small thief, as he lay upon the door-steps in his drunken sleep, dreaming, it may be, of his decent, respectable home among the far-away New Hampshire hills.

We go, you and I together, you know, to another up-town station-house, much resembling, in its leading features, the last. The jealous eye of the green lantern is there, and inside we find the bright oaken panels and the green iron railing, and the sergeant on duty, taciturn and severe. There is something going on here, but before we can ascertain what the case is, a great shuffling of feet is heard upon the steps without, and three officers enter, bearing the body of a well-dressed man—a body dressed in the height of the fashion, indeed—a body in an elegantly-cut black walking-coat, trousers of the most fashionable pearly-grey stuff, with waistcoat to match—a body of which the linen is the finest and most expensive that Broadway can furnish from its stores—a body with a thousand dollars worth of rings upon the fingers of the dead hands belonging to it, and with a diamond brooch glittering upon its broad and deep chest—a body of which the face is dark purple—nearly as dark a purple as the dyed beard with which the dropped chin is fringed—a body to which, a few minutes ago, belonged the accessories now carried alongside of it by one of the officers—the fashionable white felt hat with a black band upon it, and the heavy, gold-mounted Malacca cane. To many who stroll Broadway that body, when in



the life, was familiar, constantly, during the afternoon hours, to be seen standing, like a show-figure, at some corner, or, more often, upon the door-steps of some hotel. A couple of well-known Broadway "faro bankers" follow the procession, for the body was one of their craft, and was found dead, just now, of apoplexy, in the doorway leading to the "hell." There is a place here, in which the body will be laid away for the night; to-morrow, the coroner will hold an inquest upon it, and the next day it will be dressed up in another expensive suit of clothes, minus the jewelry, and the hat, and the Malacca cane, and put away, by the "faro bankers," into the earth.

And while we are waiting here—you and I together—for something else to turn up, dead or alive, I will recount how, one Sunday night, long ago, I saw, in one of these up-town station-houses, a scene that occurs to me just now. An officer came in, having in custody a very respectable-looking man, who seemed somewhat flurried and indignant at the position in which he found himself. There was a large following of well-dressed young men—Germans, for the most part—the accused party being the keeper of a well-known German restaurant, and a popular host among his numerous customers. It was a time when spasmodic efforts were being made by the police to suppress the concert saloon nuisance, and the sale of spirituous liquors, on Sunday, was prohibited with blue-law zeal. And so, on that Sunday evening, the satellite of the law undertook to make a descent upon "mine host" of the restaurant, and investigate keenly the liquor then and there standing before the customers of the house. It was mostly lager bier and Rhenish wine that appealed to the senses of the officers, who tasted as they went—in some instances taking a pretty good pull at the tippie, too. At last they found that of which they were in search—a tumbler that had stood before a departed guest, and that tumbler was found to have contained—rum. The landlord had but short shrift accorded to him—hardly time, indeed, to don his coat—and hatless, if I remember rightly, he went. The excitement about this capture was intense, the indignation both loud and deep. Every customer who happened to be in the place rallied round the landlord, and supported him, while the night-officer recorded in the great book his name, occupation and crime. Any amount of bail was offered for him on the spot, but the night-officer was inexorable. "None could get him out before the morning," said he, "excepting the City Judge." Off a couple of the customers started for the residence of that official, but they returned, after a long absence, only to say that he could not be found; and so "mine host" had his lodging in the cell for the rest of the night. They led him to his "vile dungeon," and laid him upon his "mouldy straw," and in the morning, the magistrate at the neighboring Police Court disposed of the case summarily, by sending the worthy vintner back to his wine-casks. And so ended a capital illustration of the virtue of sumptuary laws—injunction so savory to the nostrils of those who would

"Hang a cat on a Monday  
For killing a mouse of a Sunday."

But here we have another, and a far more gorgeous *tableau*, in

one of these elegant station-houses at the dead hour of the night. Three or four carriages come rattling over the pavement, and pull up in the glare of the green lantern. There is a great bustle without—a flutter, so to speak, as of the unpacking of damaged goods. Now a sweep and rustle of skirts on the station-house steps; the doors are thrown open to their utmost yawn, for there is unlimited crinoline on the threshold, and in there flaunts, now, a portly dame, the ruby ripeness of whose face proclaims that if she has not lived wisely, yet she has lived uncommonly well. She is attended by a dozen or so of sylph-like creatures, whom the officers in escort considerately speak of as the “young lady boarders” of the establishment over which the rufescent matron presides. Most of them are very pretty, and one or two of them really beautiful—“young and so fair.” Irreverently the policeman to whom we address ourselves for information, tells us that a midnight descent has just been made upon a “moll crib,” as he calls the “boarding house” of the portly dame, and that we see before us the net proceeds of the “haul.” Observe the self-possessed manner of nearly every one of the bevy under what might naturally be considered trying circumstances for “young lady boarders” of such ethereal fibre. In the bustle caused by their arrival a drunken sailor, who had been brought in by a patrolman, is left to himself for a moment, and, pitching forward, he strikes his head against a door-jamb with violence, and falls senseless to the floor, where he lies prostrate—a ghastly object, bleeding from the nose and mouth. Do the sylphs scream and faint away, as the tragic spectacle is unfolded to their eyes? Not a bit of it; they gather up their skirts, though, so as to avoid imbruing them in the gore, and, with a graceful sweep, each one of them files past poor Jack on the floor, without so much as a change of color. Indeed, a change of color would involve, for most of them, a tedious chemical process, on account of the “kalsomining” by which, alone, a blush can now be brought to their cheeks. We scan the features of the rufescent queen of the sylphs, and wonder where we have seen her before. Now we have it. Often of a fine afternoon in Central Park, when the Drive is all a-whirl with the gay equipages of the Upper Ten and the Shoddy Twenty, there may be seen in the line a carriage of the heavy “drag” build, drawn by a pair of stately brown horses, with silver-mounted harness, and white fly-nets to keep the teasers from tickling their well-tended cuticles. Coachey on the box is absolutely a sight to see. Either he is an English nobleman in disguise, doing the thing for a heavy bet—according to the usage of English noblemen ever since the days of the Regency—or else he has been coachman to an English nobleman, for he handles his ribbons with a felicity which none but a first-rate artist could achieve. He is able-bodied, and of a temperament most florid to behold. The trimness of his triangular grey whisker is a study for the artist in hair. He is clothed in a plum-colored livery, with large silvered buttons cropping out upon it in reckless profusion, and to one side of his hat is affixed the aristocratic “cockade.” Quite a holiday coachman is he, and meet to drive gingerly over pavements the sprightly wedding guests. Instead of which he goes driving for an “establishment” where matrimony is an unrecognized responsibility, and the wedding-ring

scuffed at as a symbol of nought. Between the wheels of this equipage trot a couple of well-trained coach-dogs. They are spotted creatures, be it observed, and so in harmony with the character of the establishment, to which nothing that is spotless can ever properly belong. And, reclining upon the well-cushioned seats of this luxurious carriage, you shall behold on those bright afternoons the portly dame who is here to-night on the charge of keeping a disorderly house. She did not come here in her own carriage, and coachey is now probably availing himself of circumstances at the "establishment," and pitching into the seven-dollar champagne. For to-night the queen of the sylphs and her "young lady boarders" must lodge along with plebeian street cyprians in the station-house cells. To-morrow it is hard to say what will become of her, or how the thing is managed; but you may bet on seeing her any day next week rolling in stateliness along the Drive in the Park. Coachey will touch his hat to her, with his old affectation of respect, and just as if my lady had never been descended upon for keeping a "moll crib;" and, some future morning or another, you shall read in the papers of a fresh descent upon her establishment, and a revival of the same little domestic drama in one act. It is a real wonder how all this is done—but done it is, beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Sometimes the station-house at night is the scene of tribulation brought upon ladies not exactly of the cyprian stripe, but whose fast manners and free living entitle them to be considered leading members of the *demi-monde*. These ladies live, for the most part, at hotels, where they occupy handsome apartments, and, having plenty of money, are free to the best of every thing the house affords. A descent may some night be made upon an aristocratic gaming-house, in a fashionable quarter of the town. The implements are confiscated; there is a general sequestration of the "chips" and other effects. The dealers, and some twenty players, are taken into custody, and marched off to the station-house for the night. Among the captives note a very pretty young fellow, with curly, auburn hair, and a complexion as fair as a woman's. Short of stature, but graceful, he is dressed in the height of the fashion, and his hat sits jauntily on his crisp curls in a way that is very bewitching to see. He is the most *nonchalant* of the group, and puffs his segar defiantly under the very nose of the night officer, when the station-house is reached. All the delinquents are committed for the night, to be discharged with an admonition in the morning, when brought before the sitting magistrate at such and such a police court. But the gay young fellow with the yellow curls does not long occupy the cell to which he has been consigned. Somehow a message has been conveyed by him to somebody. There must be spirits around. *Somebody* is here in a trice, and there is an *open sesame* for the boy with the golden head—or shall we say with the golden hand? Observe narrowly his figure as he goes leisurely away with the friend who has called for him. It is very feminine in its contour—especially about the bust. Well, that is no business of ours. Mrs. — is said to be a very fascinating person, and her influence in certain quarters is unbounded. Sometimes she unsexes herself for a frolic in paletôt and peg-tops; and if she does, how much worse is she,

pray, than the Lady Godiva, who cantered through Coventry in a closer costume than that, to the delight, though subsequent grief, of Peeping Tom!

In the lower wards of the city it is hard times for the patrolman at night. Loiter in the light of some green lantern that winks its jealous eye upon a groggery or pawnbroker's den, and is reflected far down by the inky pool that stagnates under the very noses of the satellites of the law. Light your segar, and loiter here, a little, to see who comes along. Yonder, in the dark, there is a scuffle, an exchange of blows, and of language such as masters of deportment do not usually inculcate upon youthful gentility. Somebody has got the better of somebody else, at least, and here now they come—a patrolman still struggling with a badly-beaten rough, whose head he has been obliged to club in order to reduce him to submission. They tumble into the station-house in a very exhausted condition, the patrolman bleeding profusely from the face. Indeed he nearly faints away from loss of blood, and, on examination, it is found that his nose has been nearly bitten off by the beast with whom he was in conflict. The surgeon of the precinct is sent for in haste. Luckily he is on hand, and the unfortunate patrolman's nose, which remains attached to his face by only one frail corner of skin, is skillfully sewn on by him to its place, in time, it is hoped, to save disfigurement for life. It is a pity that the crime of mayhem, as this biting and maiming business is termed, is not liable to extreme rigor of law. Six months' imprisonment, we believe, with some paltry and insignificant fine, is the highest punishment a court has it in its power to impose.

Here, as we watch in a station-house on the west side, there is a great excitement, and a notorious pugilist, a man of herculean frame and fine proportions, is brought in by a posse of policemen. He is drunk, and his language is blasphemous and obscene. He may be an alderman, yet. After him is borne the bleeding body of his victim—the patrolman who undertook to arrest him, and whom he—brave pugilist!—shot with a revolver in a cowardly spasm of mistrust of his own fistic skill. The patrolman is not dead, indeed, and he ultimately recovers, but has had a "hard scratch" for his life. Sing Sing subsequently receives the pistol-pugilist for a term of four years. Perhaps he has underground influence, though, and will be "pardoned out" at the expiration of two. Then he will be a made man for life. His "crib" will be the resort of admiring members of the "fancy." The "sports" will crown him with the glossiest of laurels. By and by he will be matched, probably, to fight some noted champion of the ring, and will make a great splurge about it at first; but finally he will back down, on the objection that pistols are not in accordance with the rules of the "London P. R."

It is no uncommon thing for a patrolman to be brought into the station-house of his precinct at night, suffering from some severe contusions or fractures of head or limbs. He has been attempting to make an arrest of some burglar or rowdy on his beat, and has been set upon by the gang. Slung-shot and sand-clubs are the weapons mostly in vogue with this class of miscreants, and they have been trying them on this luckless patrolman's head. The sand-club is a new and fearful weapon, lately introduced into this

country by the English "ticket-of-leave men" who settle down in our midst. It consists of a long, narrow tube of canvas, tightly crammed with sand. With this a skilful operator will tap an unsuspecting person on the crown of the head with sufficient force to produce immediate insensibility, or even death, and without leaving much external mark to betray how the injury was inflicted. In cases where an officer has thus been set upon, it is rare, indeed, that any arrests are ever made. The officer is engaged with his prisoner, and the attack is so sudden that he is knocked senseless before he has time to take observation of his assailants.

Strange revelations of Broadway are sometimes developed in the station-houses at night. There are places on Broadway that are little dreamed of by the fashionable *fleur-de-lis* who pace it to and fro when it is all a tulip-bed of gay colors on a fine afternoon. There are "cribs" on fashionable Broadway just as there are in Broome or Houston streets. Here, on a charge of keeping a disorderly house—"a resort for tipplers, thieves, prostitutes, and other abandoned and dissolute characters"—comes a fellow well known among the Broadway "sports." His house is in a central and conspicuous part of the great thoroughfare. On the ground floor there is a large concert saloon, where "pretty waiter girls" do the honors of the establishment to the frequent comers. Rows are constantly occurring there long after quiet people have gone away into their first sleep of the night. It is three o'clock in the morning, now, and there has just been a desperate fight in the place. The police have been down upon it, and have brought in the proprietor and one of his "pals." To-morrow they will be liberated on bail. Plenty of "influential" citizens will be found to go a 1500 for them on that. It was in this house that, not long since, a prize-fight took place in the open day—a regular ring business with stakes and ropes, and all that. The police had information of it, and broke in, but there were no arrests made, the principals and spectators all making their escape by getting through windows on to the roof of the adjoining houses and so clear away. And, at the present writing, the establishment is in the fullest of bloom, with its waiter-girls, and gaming-tables, and bad liquors, and pickpockets and all.

The station-houses at night afford but too many illustrations of the freedom with which the knife is resorted to by the dangerous characters who haunt every part of the city under cover of dusk. The "cutlery" is always on hand, and not a night passes but bright blades reek with human blood. Here we are in a station-house not far from Central Park, and a strong posse of police have just brought in no fewer than twelve roughs who were engaged in a stabbing affray that occurred an hour ago. The scene of the tragedy was a porter-house, the proprietor of which is in custody among the twelve. Gambling was the origin of the affair. It is not to be imagined that a porter-house is a place in which no drink is to be had for the money except the mild malt beverage from which the designation of such places is taken. The worst of bad whiskey and vile rum is the regular tippie in these resorts. Full of such stimulants, these gorillas quarrelled over their greasy cards, and the "cutlery" came into play very promiscuously. Some one of the party fought with a large dirk-knife, the blade of which was driven

with such force into the forehead of another as to penetrate the brain, from which injury death ensued in a few minutes. The parties all Irish—as is sometimes the case where there is a fight and a murder, and whiskey to command.

But it is not with the Irish, probably, that the use of the knife as a weapon originated in this country—though they seem to take it very kindly, indeed. On the Continent of Europe, as is well known, the knife is the favorite weapon of the bravo and the brigand. Italy has her “cutlery” always ready for a stab under the fifth rib. The Spaniard has his dirk somewhere about him, you may depend, and so has the wily Portuguese. Our domestic negro, here, makes free use of it in his noisy broils over the gaming-board; and the queer, unclassified sailors belonging to ships in the port—be they Lascars, or what not—are ever expert with their “bleeders.” Come to the notorious Cherry street quarter, where all such do mostly congregate at night. We shall wait but a short time in the station-house here, I promise you, before some swarthy fellow, with blood upon his hands, is hauled in by the police. Here come three—all Italians, apparently, and sailors, and one of them requires the offices of the police surgeon with speed, for he has been stabbed dangerously in the side. They fought in a Cherry street dance house, all about a painted syren whose charms had fascinated all three, and one of them will be a corpse before the first ray of dawn struggles in at the hazy panes of the station-house windows. The other men are stabbed, also, and it is probable that they will be sent on board their respective ships in the morning, for they are all drunk and nobody can tell who struck the first blow.

And in this same neighborhood, John Chinaman figures, not unfrequently, in the station-houses at night. There is no more avaricious or money-grubbing man in the world than John Chinaman; he worships his gains as he would one of his clay gods, and it is over his money that his quarrels most frequently take place. See, here are a brace of them just brought in, one of them dying from several stab-wounds inflicted on him by the other. They are not pleasant men to look at, either of them, and would not be desirable companions to go up in a balloon with, if you had greenbacks for ballast and a tendency to fall asleep. They have been fighting in their boarding-house—money the cause. The stabbed man offered to settle the matter in a face-to-face fight, but the other declined the wager of battle, and sat down in a chair. Soon after, his antagonist came behind and pulled the chair from under him, whereupon the “cutlery” came into requisition, and John Chinaman, No. 1, was stabbed to death.

With all precaution, and the exercise of constant vigilance, it is impossible to prevent suicides from occasionally taking place in the station-house cells. Not long since, a fugitive from justice was arrested in this city, charged with taking the life of a woman with whom he had been living in Washington. He was locked up in one of the city station-houses for the night; on handing his supper into him, care was taken not to furnish him with either knife or fork. Nevertheless, when morning came, he was found lying dead on the floor of the cell, deluged in blood. He had broken a piece off the tin plate on which his supper was served, and, with the jagged

point of this, had opened the main artery of his left arm, and so cheated the law.

Now and again, at night, the police make a raid upon the unfortunate cyprians who perambulate the streets. The effort is usually spasmodic, and, of course, has no permanent effect upon the reduction of the "social evil." On these occasions, every courtesan who steps to speak to a man in the street is arrested, and locked up in the Precinct station-house for the night. In these cases, suicides are not unfrequent occurrences; they are generally effected by strangling. You remember how "unfortunate Miss Bailey," in the ballad, "hung herself, one morning, in her garters." The tragedy is often realized in the lone cell, at night. Some necessary projection, or bar, affords a point of resistance, and "another unfortunate" makes away with her miserable existence, by means of the impromptu bow-string immortalized by the balladist of the poor Bailey girl.

Among the strange contrasts often presented by the station-houses at night, we should not forget to mention the lost children. Here comes a stalwart policeman, leading by the hand a little one, whose terror is too deep for tears, or, rather, the little cherub has pumped the lachrymals dry, already, and there are no more tears ready for distribution yet. It was found toddling round in circles in Washington Park, hours after it should have been in bed, and dreaming of Santa Claus. Not a word can be had from it as to residence, but it admits that its name is "Melie," and expresses a desire to "go to mama." The little creature is comfortably dressed, and belongs, evidently, to a French mother, for, on being addressed in that language, it answered quite as readily as in English, though nothing further can be elicited from it. It is possible that it may have strayed away from home, but the police will tell you that desertions effected in this manner are, by no means, of unusual occurrence. This small waif shall not be locked up in a cell like criminals, during the night; it is ordered for transfer to the Police Head Quarters, in Mulberry street, where it will be taken motherly care of by the matron in charge of the department for lost children. The number of little ones thus taken in charge by the police, averages four hundred per month. Besides these, there are foundlings, left in baskets upon door-steps, or found, swathed in rags, in a corner of some vacant lot; such are sent to the Institution of Charity and Correction, on Randall's Island, whither the stray ones are also transferred, unless claimed within a reasonable time. The quarters prepared for the reception of these stray lambs in the great Mulberry street building, are fitted up with every regard to their comfort, and here it is not unusual to find children who have, by some accident, strayed away from parents of affluence and position. The police records show that, for the year ending with October, 1864, no less than 10,000 lost children were brought in, and disposed of at Head Quarters and the several precincts—6,281 of them being males, and 3,759 females. This figure includes those that were claimed and taken away by their parents during the night.

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## CHAPTER IX.

## THE TOMBS ON SUNDAY MORNING.

ALL New York has had a peep at that dismal, gloomy pile of granite, called the Tombs. Its cheerless Egyptian style of architecture, its uninviting locality, combine to make its effect on the passer-by anything but agreeable—a dreaded abode of stern, remorseless justice.

The gaslights streaming up the hill of Elm street, like lines of golden bees—to borrow a simile from Shelly—are growing fainter and fainter in the dawn of this frosty December morn. A grey mist still broods in the atmosphere, and the shadows around this big, square pile of granite are melting; but it will smile not, even in the rosy dawn. Save the tinkling of a distant car bell, the world around is as quiet as a church-yard; not a pedestrian to be seen, not a even vagrant dog or a skulking cat gives life to the deserted quarter. The grogeries festering in its proximity are barred up, and their inmates are snoring off their drunken stupors. Through the open iron gate, up its many cold, slippery steps past its ponderous pillars, and we are in a dark, cavernous porch. Now to this door to the left, on the threshold of which we meet a group of sleepy Metropolitans, and we enter the Justice's court. It is not a large room, but its ceiling is lofty, and great deep windows gash its sides. The floor pitches towards a railed enclosure, within which, on an elevation, sits the Judge, the clerk, and their assistants. Wooden seats, divided by a centre aisle, face this forum. The railed enclosure runs along the front of the Justices' desks, and leads to a door at the end, the entrance from the prison. Beside this door is another, that of the examination room. A little gate, guarded by a squad of policemen, opens into the aisle and gives exit to the fortunate. The seats are well filled with a gathering of old women, sympathetic brothers and sisters, a few idle spectators, flashy roughs, and a politician or two, eager to reap a batch of votes by proffering bail. Some of the old women are snivelling, some of the men are talking in bated breath, and the roughs to a man are squirting tobacco furiously.

The presiding Judge is a type of Shakespeare's Justice—"belly with goodly capon lined." The moving human panorama of vice, vagrancy and want daily revolving before his eyes, is not reflected the least in his jovial face. Stern, unflinching justice may be his attribute, yet he reveals it not in a line or furrow. Well dressed, up to the prevailing style, his pendant whiskers trimmed to a nicety, he lolls in his awful seat a perfect specimen of a *bonhomme*. You would think a pitiful tale or an extenuated wrong would move so much geniality from its harsh duty. Not so; Judge Hogan knows too well that the law is not a sentiment. He is in the flood-tide of the business of the day. Saturday night, of all nights of the week, reaps a full harvest of criminals. Much of the weekly wages of the working class are sure to flow into the rum-seller's till, and their fiery draughts in turn send many of the poor fellows into the hands



of the police. On the heels of a holiday the young "bloods" about town always sport through the city with a greater zest, looking forward to the quiet of a Sunday to sleep off their orgies and cool their fevered blood. There is no lagging in the work of this Sunday morning court—fines are levied, innocents discharged, and evil-doers committed with a commendable activity, and the judicial functionaries seldom miss their breakfast.

But let us detail some of the scenes shifting before us. Some are amusing, and awake a hearty laugh in the sombre hall. Many are moving, and do not fail to cause a throb of sympathy in the heart of the most satiated observer; but the more are of a character that carry disgust to the very soul, and you shudder at the depths into which humanity can fall.

Bridget, a stalwart Amazon of the Milesian persuasion, had appropriated the head-gear of a fellow female lodger, so the latter lady swears. The head-gear, which may be mistaken for any old house-keeper's mop, is displayed in court.

"Indeed I payed seven shillins for it, Judge, and if the gentleman with the big brass buttons will jist step around the corner to the lady's what keeps a thread and needle like store, she'll be apt to swear the same as meself. Shure, it's not the like of me that would wear the koverin of such a lively head as the top piece of that impudent hussy," pointing to complaining lodger, who happened to be at that instant irritating her scalp.

"Silence!" said the Judge, or some one whose duty it was to impose it.

The little half-born titter in the court is quickly strangled. Bridget thought her wit had gained her a point, but the straight-forward story of the lodger and her witness deprived Fiddy of all title to the old head-gear, and by way of solace, the Judge proffered her a rural excursion to that "gay and festive" isle at the foot of Fifty-second street, East River. As she was escorted back to the prison by a gentlemanly M. P., she shotted her tongue with the vilest of all vocal volleys. It would have made the traditions of Billingsgate blush.

A brutal, savage, rum-eaten creature, squalidly clothed, the haunting carcass of a Cherry street cellar, now stands at the bar. A feeble, haggard woman, soon to be a mother, as filthily clothed, her eyes blackened, an angry flush on her forehead, moans out her piteous wail against the brutality of her lord and master. They go fearful lengths in their hell of cruelty, these poor Irish females, before they lift up their voices at a justice bar for a drop of amelioration. The doings of a Cenci pale before the record of this brute's fiendish acts. What a relief to think that this ferocious animal is to be caged for awhile; and you think that this poor female has got rid of her trials. Bah! These blue-coated metropolitans will tell you, when that ugly wound heals, and a few weeks roll around, that she will moan over the step she has taken, and that this very author of her woes will be welcomed from exile with joy.

And what has brought this nice young man into the caravan?

"Well, Judge, I did get a little high—drank a little too much 'Madam Cliquot' in the back parlor; got a little jealous. Wine and women, you know—smashed a mirror or two—mussed up things

generally ; went out on the sidewalk to cool off—up set a row of ash barrels—pulled a little Dutchman's nose—rang a few door-bells—stuck a barber's pole into a confectioner's shop—(Judge: "Rather a big stick of candy,") then topped off by upsetting policeman No. —, the devil knows what his number was, I can't remember—"

"Tut! tut! my healthy boy, I know exactly how to make up your little bill; be careful how you come this way again, young sport. You'll have something to remember me by besides a fine."

Then there was a squad of bloated drunkards reeking with foul gin. A quartette of courtizans, their painted faces ghastly in the morning light, their dishevelled locks, their torn finery parodying beauty, sickening the very soul—and preaching purity and morality from the very contrast. Thieves, pickpockets, swindlers, follow them. Now it is a poor pale-faced little fellow—an Oliver Twist—the pupil of some Artful Dodger. He has a little blue bundle under his arm, and has passed a sleepless night with vagrants around him. They are audible, the sobs of his poor mother weeping on the wooden bench; his blue eyes swim with tears at the sight of her. Perhaps as they pass out of this sombre room, hand in hand, they will hear the sweet music of the church bells, and a good angel will ever guard from crime the soul of that poor, pale faced little fellow.

The audience who sit in the Tombs court of a Sunday morning, listen to terrible sermons—sermons, the texts of which are the creation and the victims of vice. To turn now and then from pleasant scenes, and spend a short hour here, can alone inform you of the horror, the brutality, the viciousness of a great city's outcasts.

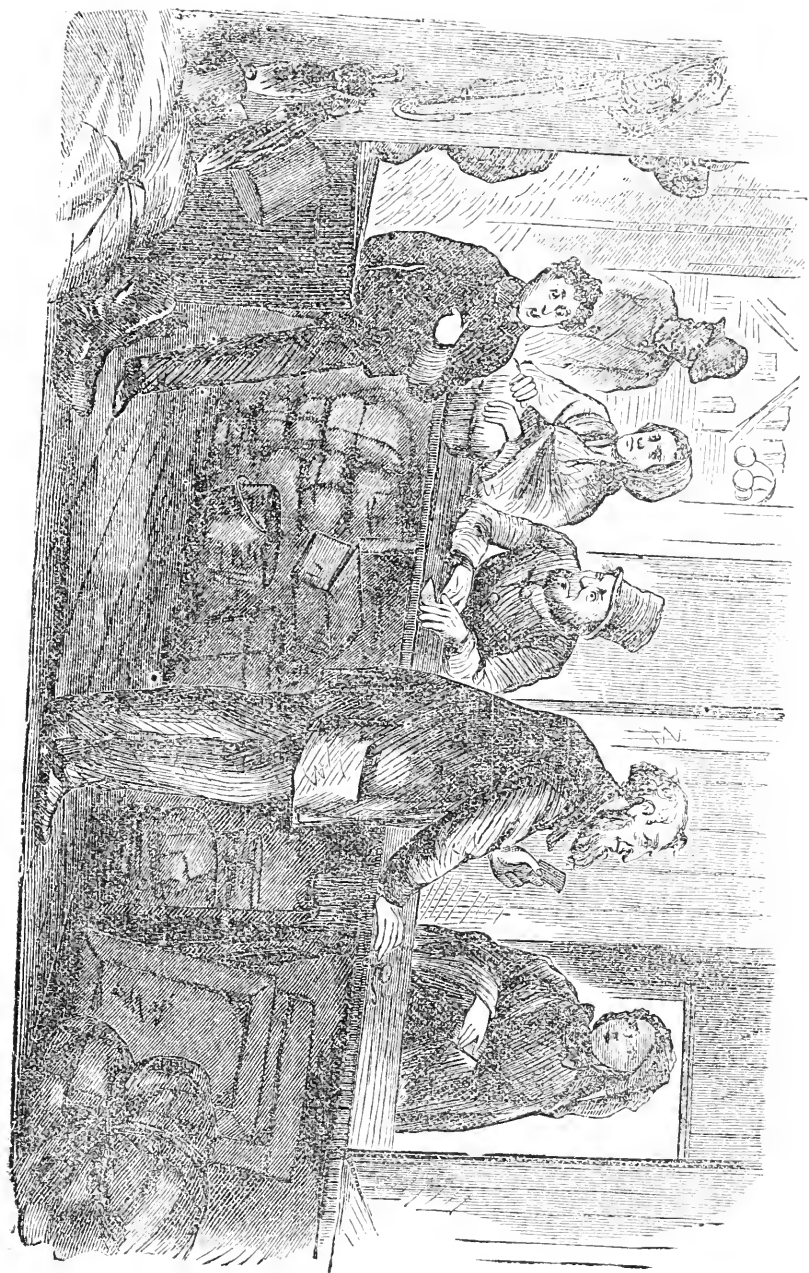
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## CHAPTER X.

### THE MARKETS AT NIGHT.

FULTON MARKET, at night, presents a good many features characteristic of New York city and its motley population. Most of the night, as well as all day long, the narrow arcade running along the Fulton street front of this dingy old pile, is crowded with an ebb and flow of passengers on their way to and from the Brooklyn ferry-boats. Hundreds of these passengers thus take their way, night after night, without ever turning aside into the market alleys, to view their aspect after the business hours of the day are over. Perhaps there is not much to be seen, after all, but let us take a turn through the place, and look about us a little.

You see those long basement places of entertainment that abut on the arcade, and in which, as we pass, several marketmen in aprons, and other men, coatless, and in red shirts, may be seen drinking at the bars. These places are never closed—at least the present writer has passed them, many and many a time, at all hours between just after dark and daylight, and their business, if slack, still always seemed to warrant the outlay necessary for a relay of night hands. The boats run all night, and there is always a chance



that some hungry or thirsty wayfarer on his way to or from them, will "stop in" at the basements, to fortify his "department of the interior."

Dim lights, you may observe, are burning in the alley-ways of the market, giving a very ghostly appearance to the scene as you view it from a little distance. Shadowy butchers, or watchmen employed by the butchers to look after their property, are seen flitting slowly here and there among the rows of carcasses with which the alley-ways are lined. Up to about ten o'clock, or thereabouts, some of the fruitwomen may still be seen sitting by their tables, but they will soon stow away their stock, now, and go home to count the gains made by them throughout the weary day. Pass this way, along the arcade that looks out toward the river. Two or three burly policemen, club in hand, are slowly pacing up and down, as you will observe, and their presence is very necessary, indeed, for there are no end of skulking places all around the market, and, even in broad day-light, many a watch or pocketbook is filched from the unwary passengers to and from Brooklyn. The great green-and-red "cross-town" cars take up their stand just at the foot of the market, where several stages are always in waiting, too. As you jostle in or out of these vehicles, look very sharply to your pockets for it is in these jostles that the light-fingered operator finds his opportunity; but the policeman who stands by the arcade post near by is all eyes for such. The cake-and-coffee shops along the river-front arcade, are, as you see, still in full operation, and many, if not all of them, remain so throughout the night. Queer little saloons they are, something like ship's galleys. The proprietors wear a very tidy appearance, with clean white aprons and a rather professional air. All the utensils are as bright as silver. The "spread" along the front counter is a tempting one to the appetites of those who indulge in pastry, though you and I, perhaps, might discern dyspepsia lurking behind the dainty show. There are pies, there, of many a mysterious combination. Some of them present obvious indications of treacle and dough, and if you watch the stray passengers who come along, you will see that five out of six of them select that sort of pastry for immediate consumption. Certainly it seems very easy to bolt, and perhaps it is very filling at the price. The coffee is always kept very hot, here, and perhaps that is about the best that can be said of it, although it is no worse than that generally dealt out in the cheaper saloons about the city. Here and there, as you pass on toward the Beekman street front of the market, little oyster establishments are in full operation under the arcade. The glowing braziers look very comfortable this chilly night, and it is not easy to resist the urgent invitation of the artist who is engaged in frying scollops for a night customer, who sits inside the little stall. Shell-fish are shell-fish, now, all along o' the war, and that fry will be charged for at the rate of forty cents. Four years ago about half the money would have secured it. But the shell-fish in Fulton market are superb, and people, now-a-days, do not grumble much about prices. Eels get used to being skinned, we are told.

Up to about twelve o'clock at night, the liveliest nook in Fulton market is Dorlon's—a place so well known to all house-keepers who

go marketing by day. Dorlon does a pretty good business at night, in the oyster supper way. Here, as we retrace our steps along the arcade, come some lively, bouncing girls with their beaux, all on their way home from New York, or perhaps, from church, but still more perhaps from the Brooklyn Academy, or theatre, or some other profane place of amusement in which that rather prim suburb is prone slyly to indulge. They enter Dorlon's, where already several voyagers of the raging ferry are seated at the small tables. If you delight in seeing the mysteries of shell-fish cookery, this is the place for you to feast your eyes. See how featly that slim youth with the check-sleeves and close-cropped hair tosses up a stew. The young gentleman who obligingly opens oysters is master of his profession. He is a graduate of Fulton market; and, that giving him precedence, nothing more remains to be said. But prices rule too high here, yet, and if Libby, far up Fulton street, charges but twenty cents for a stew, we hardly see why the price of one in Fulton market should be kept up to twenty-five. But the connoisseur in oyster knows that the article is good, here. At some of the tables you will observe that solid, business-like men are having their oysters on the half-shell, accompanied by foaming "tobies" of nut-brown ale. These are probably residents of Brooklyn, whose business lies in New York, and keeps them in the city until the night is well advanced, and Dorlon's is their favorite place of stopping in on their way to the ferry.

As the night advances, the place grows dimmer and dimmer, and even the stalls and cellar-places are all shut up except the few that keep astir the night through. Passing away from the market, you will catch, even more than by day, the reeking exhalations that arise from the heaps of oyster-shells and garbage with which the gutters are dammed. There seems to be no drainage here. Pools of stagnant water collect at the lower corners of the arcades; and just when the thoroughfare is most crowded, close by the ferry-gates, filth and miasma seem to be the general characteristics of the scene.

But what is to be said of Washington market, if that of Fulton seethes thus over a caldron of filth? Turn down Vesey street with this writer, and take a nocturnal glance at the terrible old huddle of abomination, and purulence, and slime. The only reputation for decency that Washington market enjoys is based upon the quality of the food sold in it, which is excellent. The surroundings of the place are execrable. It is notorious for the bold operations of the thieves who haunt it through the crowding day. There is but one comforting suggestion arising out of the dirty old pile, as you contemplate it. If it isn't pulled down soon, it will tumble to pieces of itself. It will take a thousand tons of chloride of calcium to purify the site where it stands when it is gone. Let some enterprising glover contract for the removal of the rats that will be sacrificed when the dilapidation of Washington market takes place. Their skins will be a fortune to him for the manufacture of genuine *gants Jouvin*, or of real Alexandre kid gloves, imported direct from Paris.

Now, as we view the ricketty concern at night, there is but little to catch the eye, though a great deal to catch the nose. There is

no great ferry thoroughfare by it, as by Fulton market, and its places of entertainment, consequently, are closed. The filthy stalls that stick out like brown wens from the sides of the building loom hazily now, for the streets here are very indifferently lighted. At the western end of it, right over on the river pier, there, you see there is a very large show of meat, the well-dressed carcasses hanging out in long rows open to the street, and forming a ruddy background to the horse-cars that continually pass and repass. But meat can hardly be called a sign of life, and the whole place has a desolate and deserted look. All the little penny-dealers have put their tables away for the night. Those large, dirty chests that lumber up the street close under the market stalls, are where the small dealers put away their goods and chattels until the dawn of another day. One hopeful old man, with cheap segars to sell—and vile ones “at that”—still sits at his crippled table, dozing under a feeble ray of gas-light. There is a man at work whitewashing some of the stalls—a little job that must be done either at night or on Sundays, no matter which. See how the posts that support the dilapidated roof of the alleyway are nearly worn through by the action of the halters of wagon-horses that are tethered to them during the day. It would not take a Sampson to pull down *this* edifice by straining on the pillars!

The places of entertainment that bound the market on three sides do not seem to have much call at night. Some of them have long dining-rooms, with bars; and bowling-alleys and billiard-rooms are attached to a few. But they are very dreary at night, for the spot is not a cheerful one, and but few care to linger in it after dark. Now and then there sallies forth from a drinking-saloon some belated market-gardener from New Jersey, who has got “pretty well on,” and is only now getting into his wagon to drive back to his rustic homestead. Years ago we heard from an old customer of Washington Market a story of some such old farmer as you. He had been in town all day with his son, a young stripling of seventeen years. Towards evening, soon after the market was lighted up, the old man got hustled in one of the passages by a pack of thieves. He had been drinking a little, and his blood was up, and, being a powerful man, he made short work with those nearest to him, until the whole of the rascals took to their heels. Passing a corner soon after this, he came suddenly on one of the thieves, as he supposed, running along the sidewalk at a great pace. One of the large chests along the market wall happened to be open, and the old man, seizing up the fugitive as he brushed past him, crowded him quickly into this, and, having shut down the lid, and driving a chip through the staple to keep the hasp from slipping, walked away, chuckling at the successful trick played by him upon the rascally pickpocket. Now he gets his wagon out to start for home, but, on calling to his son, that youth was nowhere to be found. While the farmer was searching for him, in great tribulation, the row kicked up by the prisoner in the chest brought one of the market men to his rescue, and, lo! who should be turn out to be but the missing progeny of the old farmer, who, blind with whiskey and rage, had failed to recognize his offspring. But the worst of the joke was that the box happened to be half full of eggs, into

which one of the dealers had stowed them a few minutes before, leaving the lid up until he returned with another basket of them! The plight of the young man from the country may be easily imagined, and the old man's wallet was lightened, considerably, by the amount he had to pay for the broken eggs.

The best time to see the markets to advantage, at night, is about Christmas and New Years. Then they are brilliantly lighted up, and dressed with evergreens, and numbers of people throng them for the sake of the show. The prize meat is decorated very fancifully, on these occasions, with rosettes and wreaths of flowers. Great Christmas wreaths, like horse-collars, are hung up along the stalls. The show of trussed turkeys, and other poultry, is creditable to a great city. Now and then some strange, exceptional animal, of an edible nature, attracts the attention of the visitor. A large bear, scientifically laid open to display his internal wealth of fat, is no uncommon object in the markets at this season. Opossums, with very pig-like little faces, dangle from the stall beams by the tails, and squirrels of several varieties are tastefully festooned along with snowy hares and grey rabbits. Here you may feast your eyes upon a noble wild turkey—a gobbler of thirty pounds weight, whose plumage gleams like armor in the gaslight, and from whose breast depends a "brush," or lock of hair, six inches long. The time will soon come, it is to be feared, when *that* sort of game will be a rarity, indeed, in our markets, for the pot-hunters out West kill too many of them, and at wrong seasons. Fine fat bucks, from the northern counties of the State, with their hides and horns on, are always a conspicuous feature about this festival time. The wild fowl from the Long Island shores are infinite in their variety, and, contrasted with the piles of winter vegetables, what capital subjects they afford for the painter of still life!

There is a smart trade in toys going on, during the holiday season, in the principal markets, even to a late hour of the night. Loose-jointed negroes, or zouaves, set dancing by a simple contrivance, seem to take very well with the agents of Santa Claus. Here you may see a girl standing with a bushel of toy watches, with chains, hanging upon her arms and neck. The literature of the market is also on show to a late hour during the festival nights, and the stalls setting forth all the latest sensation stories and cheap novelettes have a good time of it. There is a pretty good show, too, of plants in flower-pots, some of them in full bloom and of rare beauty, and bouquets are not wanting even at this advanced season of the year—and night. Fulton Market, especially, is worth a ramble through at night, by the country cousins who have concluded to eat their Christmas turkey in the city, just for the novelty of the thing.

Of the city markets there is but one having any claim to solidity and appropriateness of architectural design, and that is the Tompkins Market. At night its features bear no very striking points, excepting the brilliant illumination of the whole of the upper story. That is the superb armory of the Seventh Regiment, but, as it has nothing particular to do with the subject of the markets at night, we shall here close our chapter, having discussed that topic at quite sufficient length.

## CHAPTER XI.

## WHERE GERMANS MOST DO CONGREGATE.

NEW YORK has a community of eighty thousand natives of Germany. A foreign family large enough to stock three such cities as Frankfort. The wealth of these adopted citizens has been greatly and very recently augmented by the enormous consumption of beer—beer which they alone can manufacture to perfection—beer, the immense stock of which they alone could quaff up without any outside help, at one sitting—beer which Americans are cultivating a decided taste for—beer which is usurping the crown of all Bourbon and King Apple Jack. Drinking beer, making beer, even thinking beer, one would think that the blood coursing through the arteries must be very “hoppy” indeed. Their breweries are in every ward. These castles of old Lager are as stupendous and massive as the towers of their native Heidelburgh. What a marvel is the Lion Brewery! Its vaults, its tanks, its lofts! could the London docks rival it. Then the teams that these large lords parade! The finest horses in the world are harnessed to the chariots of this “Amber God!” How proud the step over the cobbles, these great, strong steeds, in all their trappings of brass and leather and bells—a wonderful sight truly, trucking their groaning load of damp, heavy oaken kegs. Yet has it not struck you that these very horses show in their proud step and foam white bits a world more interest in the beer business than those uncouth, blue-bloused, lethargic, heavy-faced, Dutch drivers, cracking lazy whips and smoking marvellous short pipes on the throne of kegs—perhaps if these animals drank beer they too would move as helpless as the old “bronze horse.” Now according to the law of traffic, the demand should equal the supply. With a river of beer, ever flowing from these great fountains, what a stupendous absorption there must be somewhere. “Gad! wherever two Dutchmen meet then comes the lager,” George Christy used to say—but when thousands of Dutchmen meet, as they do here on the east side of the town, who, outside of the family of the “lightning calculator,” would be desirous of computing the quantity they could absorb! Come with us then into one of the famous haunts of the lager swilling community, one of the big reservoirs of the “amber stream.” The Atlantic Garden is rightly named, for the beer consumed there nightly is oceanic in its proportions. It is in the heart of the Bowery, the great German quarter, next door to the famous old theatre. Entering first the bar-room, a large, low ceiling, square room, with a bar on either hand, groaning with the weight of dripping kegs, piles of crystal glasses of all dimensions and variety; loaded with sausages, those famous snake looking, American “Bolognas,” with cakes and bread, brown and shiny, contorted and twisted, patted and moulded as only the German brain could devise; green, fresh-looking salads dripping with oil, dimpled with red beets and scarlet turnips; salads of fish, salads of meat, salads of herring, salads that the devil and Dr. Faustus only know the ingredients of; then there is a great box of segars, with a big frame of glass over them, like a



hot-bed, and there in a hundred little partitions lie short and long segars, segars of the dimensions of a sausage and the puny proportions of a straw, some are very black, some very light and some speckled like the skin of a mulatto; you can get some for a penny and some for ten times a penny, and a few, a very few, believe us, that are more than that. Purchasing one of the latter, of the black-eyed female attendant, who has a very Jewish cast of features and whose black eyes scan, very scrutinizingly, our proffered stamps—we do, as these Germans all do, envelop ourselves in smoke wreaths. The misty cloud is not too opaque to scan the going on of the tippling congregation. The bar-keepers are all fat and very busy, their hair is cut very short, and they never receive an order or serve a glass of beer without screaming, in uncouth German, what sounds like “In-s-h,” “Sw-y,” &c. Light haired boys, with round, flushed faces, like bloated red cabbages; hungry looking attendants, very bow-legged and swarthy, rush in and out, in a perpetual state of frenzy, screaming and sweating, with a pyramid of glasses. Practice breeds perfection, see how adroitly they pack dozens of glasses in a pile that reaches to their very noses. You, a stranger to the beer gardens, would be astonished at the number of goblets these bustling waiters navigate with. It’s a busy night and the wooden mallet of the keg-tapper is ever echoing—crack! crack! crack! there is a fresh keg broached—let’s follow the wake of that waddling Dutchman, who is turning off a portion of its amber fluid—let us follow him to where the strains of that band emanate. Passing through a wide, open glass door, we behold a would-be enchanting garden. It is enclosed at the sides, and overhead a high vaulted roof shuts out the stars and night air—its walls are all painted with the good intentions of some sign board artist to portray a blooming garden scene—alas! it’s the portrayal of a dismal cemetery, and the tombs and grave stones are as natural as photographs of Greenwood or Cypress Hills—melancholy daubs of a peacock or two-gives the idea of the conventional buzzards hovering over the pesty place of the dead. At the farther end of the garden is a raised platform, bordered with a dozen stunted and sickly dwarf trees, of some species unknown—to help out the conception of an earthly Eden. At the left is a big box on rafters, suspending aloft the musicians—on the right are boxes for shooting, with spring guns, the flaming bodies of ferocious Turks and Zouaves. The bow-legged genius, with his glassy hod of frothy beer, has rested his load on a black, greasy table, in the centre of the garden, and we hasten to make sure of a portion of his burden. The garden is very well stocked with bearded Germans, female Germans, youthful Germans, fat Germans, thin Germans, and every description of the German. Their chattering and husky laughing is buzzing in every direction. You look about in vain for the face of a native, and you say, with Mr. Pottipher, “My God, even the little children talk Dutch.” We said that there are present, females—they are not gaudily dressed nor painted—we will not doubt their virtue—yet we natives have a horror of seeing women drinking at public gardens, and put them all in a certain class—not so here. These are wives and daughters—they are with their families, and foreign customs—the habits of their own land sanction their presence here. Yet the influence of Ame-

rican society is being brought to bear upon the German ladies in our midst—and the presence of females is not near as general as in the breweries and gartens of their native land. But don't look among them to find beautiful women—they are very plain featured, but they wear smiling faces that are in strong contrast with the heavy, unexpressive features of their lords and masters. The majority of Germans drink deep but very slow. They seldom get noisy or hilarious, but they are always boisterous and loud talkers—and gesticulation is their characteristic. See the contrast in the effect of the beer on that batch of American youths, the sole native representatives, besides ourselves, distinguishable in this vast crowd, and this solemn conclave of Germans, at our table. The former gulp down their potations in a breath—the waiters are never idle serving them, they get redder and redder at each round of bier. Their hilarity is attracting the attention of the proprietor; they swear huge oaths and talk impertinently of those around them—then they are scuffling—now a pair of them roll under the table in a drunken wrestle—a score of glasses clatter and then crash upon the floor. Three lethargic Dutchmen, the police of the garden, get very red and hot as they rush the crew, by their coat collars, out into the street. But our neighbors! how philosophically, how calmly, they enjoy themselves. Their fanning cups are sipped, a slight draught, then, with a chorus of grunts, they rest them on the table and turn their heads around upon the scene, like languid weather-cocks—a look at the music, a slow nod to a familiar face—all to slow music, and then another sip. The music stops and they get gradually into a talk. They talk very thunderingly, to be sure; they swing their big fists like anvils—but this is exertion, and it is soon followed by a protracted rest—a rest during which the bier flows calmly, silently down—on and on, through the night's sitting, they drink and still sober, until, like the tortoise and the hare, they come out far ahead in the quantity, in their drinking race with those fast Gothamites who were hustled out just now, but to be hustled out of some other saloon or garden, until they stagger and reel into some haven of a station-house.

We will not debate the question of the intoxicative power of lager, but rest assured that it is impotent in the carcase of a Dutchman. The music is very good—we suppose even a German band could not tolerate bad music. An Alexandrian organ lends a pleasant accompaniment to the orchestra, who labored very industriously to while away with harmony the pause between drinks. The shooting boxes are largely patronized, and a source of wealth to the proprietors not to be sneezed at. Germans are generally good shots, but the uncertainty of the cumbersome spring guns "turn their science to wrath." There was one target very faintly drawn and marvelously small, to hit the bull's-eye of which causes a forfeit of twenty-five cents from the keeper of the pop-gun. One fellow, who hit it twice in succession, was told that a party was waiting for their chance, so he yielded up. Wasn't there just a little of the "Yank" in this ruse? There are other places in this quarter very numerous indeed, where the German only can feel at home. Just across the street, a few doors below, they have a theatre, where every thing is German. It is nightly crowded with

a large and appreciative audience who laugh, shed tears, and feel generally amused with a resort that takes them to the heart of their native fader-land. Here you'll see, nightly, wealthy German ladies flashing their diamonds, and gazing through lorgnettes from as luxurious a box as the West side theatres can boast. And here you'll see that marvel of curiosity, a pretty female German, in the person of a young and charming lady actress, "Frau"—something outlandish. The character of the acting is more than or inary—no ranting or tearing Forrest or Eddy tramps the stage here. To portray the pathetic seems the aim of its artists, and the performances of the troupe of the "Staats" theatre, even to us, unacquainted with their native tongue, carried pleasure to our heart. Here you find nice, black-eyed German girls, fair-featured, for they were certainly born beneath our genial skies, tending little booths stocked with dainty confectionery, or passing through the audience with well-loaded trays, meeting many customers, for combining refreshments with amusement is chronic with foreigners. They seldom have rows in their German gatherings—a notable fact, which we take a sincere pleasure in putting to their credit; if a row occurs, you can, unhesitatingly, place it at the door-steps of some inebriated Gothamite. Pugnacity lies very deep in a German, and it takes a wonderful quantity of irritation and stirring up to bring it to the surface, but, when well aroused, it is so novel a sensation to himself, that it fairly bewitches him; he strikes madly and wildly, seldom meting punishment on the head of the just offender, "or any other man." The most ridiculous burlesque of a fight is generally a Dutchman's row. Yet we won't question the laurels of the famous Garibaldi Guard, or the glory claimed by the Blencker Brigade; but at stowing away a cask of lager, or at ferocious talking, without fight, we give a hearty and unbegrudging verdict to the plaintive Dutchman.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### A FASHIONABLE GAMBLING HOUSE.

GAMBLING is not, as yet, a fashionable vice in this country. No state legalizes it; all clubs restrict it; and any member of society who would dare introduce a "faro" table to vary the excitements of an evening's entertainments, would find his halls deserted and himself ostracized. What may be the vogue at Paris is the horror of New York, and he who melts his gold at rouge et noir in Baden, with a thousand eyes upon him, would be execrated here. To say that such a one is a gambler, is to say all the bad that can be said of him; every respectable man shuns him; no society would tolerate him, and every office of trust and honor is barred against him. It's a curse that follows him, and he finds no associates save depraved characters, and no resting-place save their secret haunts. We may thank the pure morality of our earlier times, and their still weakly-honored traditions, for this excellent fiat of society, for our stern ancestry were very fierce against the laxity of European soci-

ety, and were very determined that, in the New World, open gambling should not prevail. Is it not true that the stigma of *Gambler* is a terrible curse? Take the political world, for example—thieving, swindling, perjury and a hundred other crimes, are the legacies of almost each candidate, yet the people wink at all these enormities as if they were chronic with political life, and vote them into office and out of office. And yet we are to hear of a notorious gambler bold enough to throw himself upon the suffrages of the people. Notwithstanding all we have said, gambling institutions flourish, and the wealth invested in them is estimated at a million of dollars; but they are all under the ban, and flourish, from week to week, liable, at any moment, to a visit from the police.

One of the most fashionable of these establishments, to use a misnomer, is an imposing edifice within the shade of the Fifth avenue Hotel, and managed by a wealthy individual who essayed some years ago, to win the Champion Belt of America. He won a doubtful success—or at least a much disputed one in the ring, but, if fortune was uncertain there she has since been his steady friend, and this ex-pugilist rolls in wealth, and can create the very devil among the Shylocks of the Stock Exchange, and fast bankers match their horses with him on the Harlem Lane, and swell the stakes of his own race-course during the Saratoga season.

A very alert specimen of the sable race cautiously admits us into the frescoed hall, crossing which he bows us into a well-lighted and gorgeously decorated and furnished parlor. There is nothing in the furniture or decorations to make this room discernible from the drawing-room of a family mansion, unless it be that colors are more deeply contrasted, and show is more prominent than elegance. Perhaps some of the paintings are more voluptuous—the absence of drapery more general with the painted beauties—than people are accustomed to, who don't know the story of the Cenci. A table, covered with fine damask, and loaded with the luxuries of a Roman banquet, is arranged at the upper end; lights gleam upon the silver ware and crystal, and a pyramid of purple grapes, juicy fruits, green leaves and flowers grace the centre. Attentive waiters serve you with dainty confectionery, solids, creams and game; there is pale, golden sherry, and their stemmed glasses to sip it from; brandy for heavy palates—"Widow Cliquot" or "Heidsick"—iced to perfection, and served in elegant chased goblets. A sumptuous "free lunch" for all who wish to pay their respects to the "tiger." This animal, with his gnawing fangs, has his cage in the further salon—a wide apartment, running the full width of the house, and opening out of the refreshment room.

A "roulette" board and a "faro" table are the centres of attraction. The "faro" dealer has the larger court; from its varied luck, it's the most favored game of the newly-fledged gambler. The dealer of this bank is a fine-looking, sharp-eyed fellow, with a neatly-trimmed moustache, and the air of a self-possessioned dandy. It was worth a critical survey—the dexterity with which he handled his "pieturs"—and his diamond ring was ever shooting a continuous ray of sparks. At his side sat the cashier, very busy in converting greenbacks into "bones," and now and then reversing the order of things, to the pleasure of some fortunate winner.

The group clustering around the gaming table is composed of varied professions. The uniform of the army was quite conspicuous—young officers and scarred veterans—reckless in play as at the battle front—true disciples of Mars—drygoods drummers, showing the sights to customers from the rural districts, swore big oaths, squirted tobacco juice furiously, and meekly lost the profits of their next day's bill of sale—young men venturing their first gold upon the card—looking very nervous, as if the apparition of defrauded employers haunted them—stung, perhaps, with remorse. Oh! the empty till! the false balance! the forged name!—these must be their resources on the morrow. Doctors, lawyers, merchants—no habitual haunters of these enticing rooms, but casual visitors, from the clubs where they have lost a little, now, hampered by no rules, let their passion have full sway. Playing deeper and deeper, their blood heated by the flowing wines, they'll let the night roll by before they leave that fascinating board. Skulking around these, like foul birds on the battle-field, sneak the haggard, livid professionals, the same hang-dog faces you see about the corner of Prince and Broadway on a sunny afternoon, twisting their dyed moustaches, and eyeing the victim they have "roped in," who will not escape their fangs until his last dollar is oozed out of him. The gaming seemed all one way, when a young foreigner, who had been an idle spectator, ventured his luck. "Faro" is a game the chances of which are as a hundred to eighty in favor of the bank, yet this stranger scarcely lost a counter; the tide was in his favor; even the stolid dealer showed a nervousness. Others, attempting to follow in the foreigner's track, had their checks swamped, while his were doubled. Was this one of those individuals known to us through the sensation novels, who breaks banks and wins fortunes in a single sitting? Well, his luck just lasted fifteen minutes, by the watch; it's all the other way, now; the banker looks pleased, and the foreigner is dismayed. Let's leave them here; we have no moral to preach; empty pockets will talk potently to some; those livid-faced, flashy-dressed patrons of the house will frighten off many; the pawn-brokers and the police will know more. Let's take a smoking cup of black Charlie's coffee, and some broiled oysters, sprinkled with parsley, and then recross the threshold, forever, of this palatial Gambling Hell.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### THIEVES, COUNTERFEITERS, CONFIDENCE OPERATORS, ETC.

ONCE, while on the rounds with some detectives, after we had gone through some of the dance-houses, pugilistic cribs, and other similar resorts, one of the party said to a detective, "but we have not seen any of the thieves, yet; where are your redoubtable rogues, pickpockets and burglars, of whose doings we read every day in the police reports?"

"Ask me where they are *not*," returned the officer, with a knowing look; "there's not a place we've been in to-night, where I couldn't have pointed out a dozen of them. Didn't you notice the

bar-tender, with the ruffled shirt, in the crib we have just left that's 'Hank, the Greaser.' He was a filibuster with Walker's band, and since that time he has served a term in the State Prison, for burglary, besides having been 'up at the stand,' more than once, for various offences. He's on his good behavior, now, but we keep half an eye on him. There's more like him—and worse—everywhere you go with me to-night."

Nevertheless, the thieves, of all denominations, have their particular haunts and social meetings. Terpsichore is not altogether ignored by them, and it is no unusual thing for a ball to be got up by the fraternity, for the relief of some erring brother or sister, who has been so unlucky as to run against justice, and get into "quod." If you are anxious to assist at one of these aristocratic gatherings, buy a ticket from "Hank, the Greaser," say for fifty cents, and we'll take a turn upon the floor.

We will suppose a low-lived, dingy resort, somewhere in the Fourth Ward. It is kept by an old "cracksman," or housebreaker, who has graduated in the English prisons, and whose absence from certain colonial possessions, belonging to the British Crown, is probably accredited by that kind of document known as a "ticket-of-leave." Passing through the dirty bar-room, we find ourselves in a long, low-ceiled room, with a very rickety and uneven floor. Benches are placed along the walls, and the place is dimly lighted by the gleam of two or three kerosene lamps. Upon a raised platform, at the further end of the room, are the accommodations for the orchestra, which consists of two darkey minstrels—one a professor of the violin, the other a banjoist, of much natural power. The men who come swaggering or sneaking in, are all got up in the most approved "swell-mob" style, with flashy waistcoats and neckties, and jewelry of doubtful "carat." These fellows comprise all the branches of the profession, their various designations being conspicuously on record in the slang dictionaries. The members of the opposite sex, by whom the room is already pretty well filled, are fitting partners for these chevaliers of the night. Yonder is a celebrated female "sneak-thief," who consolidates her earnings with the plunder "realized" by the swell "cracksman" who sits near her. Here and there you may recognize a "pretty waiter-girl," as one whose appearance is familiar to you in some Broadway concert-saloon. It is but too often that these poor creatures are linked in infamy with some well-known member of the "lifting" fraternity. That pug-nosed, thick-set young ruffian, of two or three and twenty, has just been released from the State Prison, where he served a term for robbery, accomplished by means of the *garrote*. The big woman, yonder, is well known to the police as an adept in the "panel game," and the young fellow with her is maintained in his idleness and starched linen, entirely by the proceeds of her indu trial crime. Crinoline, paint and waterfall are all on the rampage here, to the most alarming extent, and if ever a woman in all the throng had any good looks, the lines drawn upon her features by the hands of dissipation and vice, have managed to obliterate them pretty effectually. Queer *aliases* or *soubriquets* belong to each individual, masculine or feminine, on the floor. Among the men you may not, perhaps, recognize "Roddy, the Jump," but he is there, and so are

"Little Tommy" and "Red-haired Joe." Yonder spangled waterfall decks the neck of "Prigging Nance," and you may be certain that the syren, in the red Morocco boots, is known to particular circles as "Wild Madge." These fancy names are frequently applicable in an ironical sense, only. That somewhat advanced wench, with a slight abrasion on her cheek-bone, for instance, is known as "Gentle Annie." She once kept a concert saloon of her own, and, in pugilistic ability, she is reported as being a match for any "man of her size."

Before dancing sets in, there is a general "walk around" on the floor, to the music of the dusky orchestra. After this, the whole throng files up stairs to a supplementary bar-room, where whiskey is served out to the "gentlemen," while for the "ladies," gin and water seems to be the favorite refreshment. After this, the floor manager arranges the dances, which generally consist of Virginia reels, and reels in every possible variety. Later in the evening, the reelers will reel more than ever; there is many a reel in every bottle that belongs to that bar. It would not be good for us to "see it out here to-night, and, therefore, we will take our departure, *sans cérémonie*."

It may be that a portion of the proceeds of this thieves' ball will find its way to the hand of the hapless wight for whose relief it has been announced, but the filtering process to which the money will be liable will, doubtless, reduce it to a very insignificant amount.

It is not in resorts like the crib just described, that one is likely to fall in with the regular "Confidence Operator," by night. This branch of industrial roguery includes a great variety of character, both male and female, and as there is, usually, a certain assumption of gentility connected with it, night generally finds the confidence operator plying his vocation in the well-frequented bar-rooms, on the steps of the hotels, and in the lobbies of the theatres.

There is, in New York, as in other great cities, a class of well-dressed men, whose "confidence" operations are immediately connected with the gambling-houses. The loungeur on Broadway, if he has an observant eye, can hardly fail to be struck by the idle deportment of certain knots of men, to be seen congregated here and there, at various points, along the great thoroughfare. They are, many of them, the jackals of the gambling saloons, on the look-out for their special game. By day, they watch the passers in the moving throng; when they "spot" a provincial person, or a newly-arrived foreigner, who looks as though it might pay to cultivate his acquaintance, one of the gang will "pipe" or "dog" him, to find out where he puts up. Night falls; Broadway is all aglare with light, and all agog with noise, and music, and feverish hurrying to and fro; the stranger sallies out from his hotel to see the sights; if he happen to be a rural person, the nocturnal appearance of Broadway is apt to dazzle his eyes and confuse his senses. Whether he be a rural person or not, there is some degree of probability that, putting up at a hotel, he has tasted of the vintage furnished by the establishment, and is in a state of great contentment with himself and the world at large. Well, the confidence gentlemen are aware of all this. He follows his fancies along Broadway, taking in more confusion as he goes. Presently, a very fashionably-dressed man,

with immaculate linen, and a moustache trained out at right angles with his nose, accosts the stranger, and, seizing him rather boisterously by the hand, says: "Why, how *do you do*, Mr. Robinson; and when did you come on from Chicago? don't you remember the times we had together there last year?" The stranger bows politely, and if his name doesn't happen to be Robinson, intimates that there must be a mistake, but that "it's of no consequence." Here the confidence operator assumes an air of great self-abasement; he begs to be excused; there is such a remarkable similarity between stranger and the Robinson for whom the confidence man has inadvertently taken him; both of the same height; both wear their beards of the same cut. "Never mind, sir," says the stranger; "no harm done," and he is about to resume his walk, but the confidence man, overwhelmed with confusion at having addressed a total stranger, insists that nothing short of a libation to Bacchus can restore him to his regular peace of mind. Acceding to his importunities, the stranger agrees to take a drink with him, and proposes that they shall adjourn to his hotel for the purpose. "Not at all, sir," says the confidence man; "these hotel liquors are not to be trusted; there's a club-house, just over the way, to which I belong; that's the place for good liquor! we'll go across there, and crack a bottle of champagne." Crossing the street after his guide, the stranger ascends the steps of a heavy-fronted building, the ground floor of which is, probably, occupied as a store. They go up a couple of flights of stairs; a massive door is opened to them by a colored waiter, and they find themselves in a handsome suite of apartments, furnished expensively, and lighted up to an intense degree with such gas as the Manhattan Gas Company vouchsafe to supply to church and gambling-house alike. Dealers are forwarding the operations of "Faro" at the green-covered tables. There is a splendid supper laid out in the apartment beyond, of which the sliding-doors are open, affording the beholder tempting glimpses of the viands with which the board is laden. The place, in short, is a gambling-saloon in "full blast." It is now the function of the confidence man—who, in this branch of the business, is known as a "roper in"—to ascertain whether the stranger has any money about him, worth the game; if he has, all the wiles of the craft are put into requisition to induce him to play. It is needless to say that he never wins, except when allowed to do so, for the purpose of drawing him on. His supper may cost him four hundred dollars, or the figure may be stated in thousands, according to the circumstances of the case. Should it so happen that the stranger has but a few dollars about him, wonderful is the reaction that takes place in the sentiment of his newly-found friend. That slimy person has a bad memory—a convenient one, we should rather say; he forgets all about ordering that bottle of champagne; he becomes immersed in mental arithmetic, suggested by a phase in the game, and turns his back uncourtously upon the man who so strangely resembles the "Robinson" of his affections. Scowls are shot at the stranger from the eyes of dealers, who know well whom to scowl upon, and upon whom to smile. There is nothing said about supper; the very negro waiter takes the cue from the confidence man—coolness—and the stranger is but too glad to make his way back to the street, minus his few



dollars, generally, which, if not staked and lost upon the game, have probably been obtained from him by the confidence man, as a "temporary loan."

But although these gambling-house confidence men are a feature of the city by night, there are around you, everywhere you go, hundreds of less conspicuous operators in all manner of imposture and swindle. Let us loiter for a short time, over our mugs of ale and segars, in this, one of the most respectable taverns in the city. Many of the persons whom you see around are tradesmen and artificers of good repute, but not all. Notice at that table, yonder, a stoutish-built man, with a dull, pale complexion and a pewtery eye. His black beard is cut so as to form a circular tuft around his thick-lipped mouth, and he is very well dressed in the *negligé* style so much adopted at the present day. In his conversation he is somewhat loud and swaggering, and he makes a great show of knowing many persons who drop in, and inviting them to join him in drinks. That individual is out on bail at present, there being an indictment against him for confidence operations in the forgery branch, whereby he deluded certain city men out of large sums of money. He seems to enjoy life, and displays no traces of that wear-and-tear which industrious toil will sometimes impart to the worker.

There are confidence men around you—and confidence women, too—in every group and small crowd encountered by you as you pace the streets at night.

The counterfeiter, who works in some secret cellar or garret by day, making the photograph, the lithograph and the burin conducive to his nefarious objects, usually selects the approach of falling night as the time for putting his worthless "rags" in circulation. The first party in the transaction is the manufacturer. He has his emissaries, some of whom carry as much as one hundred thousand dollars' worth of spurious bills ready for the market. If you happen to be in a store at night, or in a tavern or hotel bar, you will now and then observe a policeman enter, and, addressing the establishment generally, make some such announcement as—"Look out for bogus fives, representing issues of the Wamsutta Bank, Fall River." A note is immediately made of this; any bill of the description offered is carefully scrutinized, and if it proves to be "bogus," the hander of it is given into custody. The emissaries who thus attempt to flood the city with counterfeit bills are but too often successful in their enterprise. Night is the time selected by them—or rather the early part of the evening—because many of the dealers, such as grocers and others, are then in a hurry of business, and less likely to look sharply at a bill before giving change for it. Sometimes the counterfeit sharper tries a regular confidence game. He will insinuate himself into the acquaintance of some green person accidentally thrown in his path. "Liquoring up" will be proposed, and the man with the bogus bills will take his new friend to some rum-shop, or grocery, kept by an accomplice. The latter gentleman, pretending not to recognize his acquaintance, is yet very polite, and furnishes drinks as often as they are called for. By and bye the counterfeiter, who insists upon treating every round, offers a bill of a large denomination in payment of the score. There is not change for it in the bar—of course—but the green man is easily per-

suaded to furnish the needful, and is probably arrested the next day for trying to pass a bogus bill! In daylight such an operation would be less likely to succeed than at night, the cover of which, too, gives the operator all the better chance for making good his retreat.

"Shoving the queer" is the craft expression for circulating spurious money.

With regard to pickpockets, it is immaterial to that extensive class of industrials whether their operations are carried on by day or by night. Every crowd, every car, every omnibus swarms with them. At night the vestibules of the theatres offer a very profitable field for the manipulations of these expert rascals. "Working the tip" is the term given by them to their enterprise in this branch. For an hour or so previous to the opening of a popular theatre, there is usually a dense crowd collected about the box office. When the ticket-taker opens his slide, the pickpocket crowds close upon the person paying at the moment, presses the hand of the payer up into the aperture, as if by accident, and having thus confined him for a moment, eases him of watch, money or jewelry, according to the chance offered by circumstances. This plunder is usually slipped into the hand of a confederate, who makes his way out with it amid the mazes of the crowd. The omnibuses, when filled with the people who have just left a Broadway theatre, are also the nightly scenes of heavy depredations by these troublesome rascals. The pickpocket, in these cases, usually takes his stand near an omnibus, where excellent opportunities of plunder are afforded to him as people jostle, and crowd, and struggle into the vehicle. He will also enter the omnibus when it is very full, and, swaying loosely from the straps, will spirit away many a brooch and many a watch from passengers who are intent upon the ignominious operation of "spouting" their money up to the driver through the hole in the roof. Look sharp should you have to travel on the rear platform of a city horse-car by night. There is no more favorable place for the operations of a pickpocket than this. A story goes of the "man with the false arms," who made a large income by his pursuit of this branch of the craft. This natural-born genius used to wear a cape, beneath which his arms were just visible, with the hands thrust well down into the trouser's pockets. But these were only stuffed sleeves. His real arms were at work under the cape, and, with the light "bunches of fives" at the end of them, did very considerable execution upon the loose property of the unsuspecting passengers.

It is at night, also, that the "sneak thief" chiefly does his prowling, the opportunities then afforded him being usually safer than such as may turn up by day. These fellows commit their depredations by slipping into doorways on pretence of having letters or parcels to deliver. They watch persons who are shopping at night, and abstract packages from the baskets or carriages in which they have been stowed. There is, in fact, no kind of mean pilfering in which the "sneak thief" is not an adept, and he is usually the meanest of scoundrels and the most cowardly of poltroons. We once had, from an eye-witness of the occurrence, the following anecdote, in which a group of "sneak thieves" is brought into bold light and shade.

The scene is at night—Brooklyn the locality. Three of these fellows, from New York, were on the prowl for plunder in the City of Churches. It was a blank night with them; but just as they were about returning to their city crib, chance took them past a plumber's shop, against the rails of which a roll of sheet lead had been carelessly left standing. This was immediately lifted by the thieves, who took it to a vacant lot, where a council was held about the plunder. The only way they could hit on for carrying it was for the strongest of the party to strip off his coat and waistcoat, and having wound the lead round his body, to replace the garments and button them tightly over it. This done, the party proceeded to the nearest ferry, and took boat for the city. The thief with the load took his seat upon the rail of the boat, which, agitated by the wake of a passing steamer, gave a lurch, and losing his balance, overboard he went. Then there was a flurry and a rushing to and fro, and a cry of "man overboard!"

"Don't be in a hurry, gentlemen!" cried an elderly man in spectacles; "the night is moonlight; the man will rise three times before he finally goes to the bottom!"

"Five he don't!" exclaimed one of the remaining thieves, producing his money, and who, being in the secret of the lead, saw nothing in the drowning of his late comrade but a good chance of making five dollars by a bet.

This was characteristic of the "sneak thief," and is a legitimate sketch of a phase of city life at night.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### HAUNTS OF THE ACTORS.

"SHALL I not take mine ease in mine inn?" is a Falstaffian query, involving the right of every man to rest and refreshment. The actor's profession is a laborious one; much of his work is over only when the night is well advanced, and it would be strange, indeed, if the suggestion conveyed in the words of the obese Knight did not influence the "tenor of his way" as soon as the foot-lights are extinguished, and the prompter's bell put away for the night. Talking is but dry work, at best; and no more anomalous, or, indeed, incomplete person could well be imagined, than an actor who doesn't care for his beer.

The houses of public entertainment to which the actors resort after the play is over, are, for the most part, situated in the central district of the city. They are generally kept on the English chop-house plan—places where the bar is auxiliary to the kitchen, instead of being the principal attraction, as in the larger American establishments. A description of a few of the leading places of this class will serve to give an idea of all.

One of the best known among them is the House of Lords, at the corner of Houston and Crosby streets. It is kept by Mr. H. E. Sharp, and is decidedly English in its aspect and arrangements. The public room is one of moderate size, furnished with a number

of small tables, and having a small bar attached to it next the Houston street entrance. This bar is fitted with a very accommodating beer pump, from which the thirsty customer can obtain either ale or porter, according to his fancy, or both mixed in the form of "half-and-half," if he likes that better. It is hung with many mugs of bright metal, interspersed with little jugs of glossy, brown earthenware. The old-time pewter mug of England is supposed to be represented by the former, though there is a touch of harder metal than pewter in their amalgam. The brown beer-jugs are of the pattern known as the "Toby," and are in great request. That name, doubtless, has its origin in the old English drinking-song, beginning "Dear Tom, this brown jug which now foams with mild ale;" for the ditty proceeds, further on, to intimate that said jug is composed of clay, once animated by the spirit of one Toby Tossopot, a toper of mark in his day. A show-card over the bar front sets forth the savory promise of "Tripe, Wednesday and Saturday," others announce "pickled pigs' feet" and sundry other delicacies, and the back-ground of the bar is made up of a very kaleidoscopic show of bottles and decanters of the most fanciful kind, with glasses to match. There is a very half-and-half air about the place generally—a combination of cricket and the drama, in about equal proportions. Yonder you will observe a large lithograph of some celebrated "eleven," all ranged in a row for their portraits, all rough and ready in their flannel and canvas shoes. A bust of Shakspeare reigns over the theatrical element of the place, and the door-jambs are hung with files of play-bills from the leading theatres, while the drama is further represented by a picture of "Garriek surrounded by his Friends."

And here comes the proprietor of the house—a shortish, well-built, wiry man, somewhat bald, and wearing a black moustache. Few men are better known to the cricketing fraternity than Sharp, who is a player of such renown, that no "eleven," for a special match, is ever made up in his club without his being counted in. Many a time have we seen him "carry out his bat," amid the plaudits of the spectators; and it may truly be said of him that he is not more popular as a cricketer than he is as a landlord and a man. And yet, of late, he seems to leave a good deal of the management of affairs to "Larry," the polite and dexterous manipulator so long in charge of the bar, and who, as *locum tenens*, has established a reputation for himself second to none.

After ten o'clock at night, there is always a sprinkling of theatrical men, critics, and performers in the various branches of the show business, to be found at the House of Lords. The fumes of the pungent Welsh rarebit then mingle voluminously with those of the fragrant Havana, and there is a very general demand for the mug, the toby, and the tumbler of reeking-hot whiskey punch. Possibly, through the mixed mist of the night, you may see looming up the portly form of Mark Smith, whose delineations of stout elderly gentlemen, with sententious utterances, evoked from the depths of their boots, are so familiar to all play-goers. If you have never seen him outside one of these avuncular specialties of his, for which he makes up so admirably, you will be surprised to find how young a man he is. If the smiling Adolphus H. Davenport—the "Dolly" of popu-

lar delight—happens to be in town, he is very likely to be here, too. "Dolly" is not, usually, the first to leave the circle, if the exercises are of a convivial character. Towering over the general level of the assembled heads, may sometimes here be seen the classic one of Charles Fisher—the handsomest member of the theatrical fraternity of New York, as well as one of the best dressed. But to run through the list would require more space than we have at our command. By the door, yonder, there hangs a frame, containing many *carte de visite* portraits of well known members of the theatrical profession, all, or most of whom have, at one time or another, been frequent *habitue's* of the House of Lords.

Next door to the resort just mentioned, as you go toward Broadway, is the house called the Clifton Shades, kept by two smart, intelligent young Sheffield men, Harry and Charles Clifton; whose taste for pictures may be judged of by a glance at the walls, which are covered with works of art from surface to ceiling. Among these you will occasionally observe some choice water-color drawings, and there is sometimes a portfolio of such, for exhibition to regular customers only. The place, altogether, has a very prosperous and comfortable look, and the value of taste in fitting up an establishment is illustrated by the class of customers to be seen in this one. Here, of an evening, you may sometimes see John Brougham—who is a greater "swell" than ever since his long sojourn in England, and quite as jovial and companionable as he used to be in the nights gone by. With him, of course, will be Tom Morris, and it is more than probable that John Owens, wonderfully spruced up from his "Uncle Shingle" of ten minutes ago, will be here to allay the honest thirst contracted by him in that wonderful piece of character acting. There is a good deal of theatrical gossip to be picked up at the Clifton Shades, than which there are few pleasanter evening resorts for all who like to keep themselves "posted" in the current *on dit* of dramatic and other art.

But, of all the city houses of entertainment to which actors are in the habit of resorting o' nights, perhaps the leading place should be awarded to the De Soto, No. 71 Bleecker street, three doors east of Broadway. This house was opened, some four years ago, by its present proprietor, Mr. William H. Garrard, under whose able management it at once acquired a reputation which it yet fully sustains. The De Soto is so called after the steamer of that name, formerly belonging to the New Orleans and Havana line of packets, to which vessel Mr. Garrard was attached in the capacity of caterer—a capacity in which he availed himself of his many opportunities for making a host of friends. Mr. Garrard is an Englishman, quite of the landlord type—polite, portly, and displaying that incipient tendency to baldness frequently to be remarked in individuals possessed of strong administrative abilities. The public room of the De Soto is fitted up with a degree of elegance not generally characteristic of the English chop-house equipment. From the ceiling there depends a large chandelier, the gas fittings of which are fashioned to represent wax candles. The apartment is long and narrow, and may be compared, not unaptly, to the saloon of a first-class, sea-going steamer. Black walnut is the material with which the walls are wainscotted, and along them runs a velvet band, for the reception of

the heads of such customers as feel the better for tilting back their chairs. Small tables are arranged about the room. The bar is much of the same style as that of the House of Lords—small, trim, and very full of the *bric-a-brac* properly belonging to such arrangements; and, with regard to the quality of liquors dispensed at it, it is not excelled by any similar establishment in the city. There is a small parlor off the public room, where accommodation can be had for private parties, on a limited scale, and a larger one up-stairs, in which dinners or suppers can be got up at fair notice, for Amphitryons who wish to “do the thing up” handsomely.

Evening always brings to the De Soto a greater or lesser number of representatives of literature, art and journalism, and later on at night, the actors and dramatic critics are sure to come dropping in, singly, or in squads. Broiled kidneys and Welch rarebits are in demand then, and the circulation of ale is only second to that of the various denominations of beverage that require to be compounded with skill. The assemblage is broken up into knots, and the hum of conversation surges to and fro upon the smoke-wreaths that are evolved from many segars. Yonder sits Humphrey Bland, the well-known actor, gypsy-like, with his long, dark locks, now slightly rippled with grey. At the same table with him sits De Walden, the dramatist, white and venerable as to his beard, but with all the fire of youth yet burning upon his intellectual front. To them presently comes Frank Chanfrau, who has just dropped in from his hundredth personation of “Sam,” in De Walden’s successful comedy bearing that title. Bluff Harry Pearson now appears, copious of dialect and cookery, and one who himself “knows how to keep a hotel,” or, at least, thinks he does, which is not, perhaps, exactly the same thing. He acts an English rustic well, and is excellent in broad burlesque; also, he knows how to cook a beefsteak pudding, and is not, in the least, too proud to acknowledge his proficiency in the art, although he will give you to understand, in moments controlled by the festal goblet, that he is heir to an English baronetcy. That dark, heavy-browed gentleman, who might pass for a dissenting minister, come in to convert us heathen, is one of the cleverest comedians now upon the American stage. His name is Holston, and he is a member of Wallack’s company; but his first appearance in this country was made at the Olympic, not much over a year ago, when he made a great hit in the character of *Byles*, and another in that of *Milky White*. The fair, almost feminine-looking young gentleman, with whom he is talking, is Edward House, the well-known dramatic critic, author, jointly with Dion Boucicault, of the successful play of “Arrah na Pogue.” Along with them sits Glenny, who plays *Shaun the Post* in that drama, and looks as Irish as a “lumper” potato, though we understand him to be of English birth. Glenny was imported specially, in the Spring of 1865, consigned to Mr. House, and, if there were an *ad valorem* duty upon actors, we should say that he would be rated by custom-house officials at a pretty tall figure. Mr. Charles Dillon, the *Belphegor* of renown, is sure to drop in here if he is in the city. He is an Englishman, too, and yet he looks as though the New York might claim him for one of the “hunkiest” of her sons. But a few short months ago, and the portly figure of poor John Cooke would have been conspicuous in

the throng, for John was one of the regular *habitués* of the De Soto. We used to call him "old John Cooke," because of his baldness and stoutness, and generally paternal air, and yet he was hardly forty-five years old when he went his way, and that solemn service was chanted over him in Trinity Chapel, on the 7th of November, 1865. It was good to sit at the same table with John Cooke, in the De Soto, of a night, for his fund of anecdote, connected with theatrical people and things, was inexhaustible, and he was a rare *raconteur*. Sometimes his memory would recall an old lay, picked up by him long ago in the London caves of song, and then he would sing it to you under his breath, and so confidentially, that none but those in his immediate group would be aware of the convivial strain. When Banting's pamphlet upon obesity came out, John Cooke became a disciple of that once great man, with a view of reducing his three hundred pounds of flesh. Great was his triumph when he had taken off eighty, which he did within a few weeks. To our way of thinking, though, he overdid the matter; and we cannot help our conviction that, had Banting never written his book, John Cooke might yet have been alive and well. John Mortimer, the brilliant light comedian, is here, too, very particular, as usual, about his kid gloves, and yon wiry little Irishman is Scallan, who plays so excellently the character of the villain, *Feeny*, in "Arrah na Pogue." Observe the hilarity that distinguishes the group around that table over in the corner, by the window. The central figure in the group is a tall, slender young man, in a grey overcoat. He wears a nose of the Roman type, only more so. His complexion is of a uniform, wholesome, brisksome red. His light-brown, glossy hair is of such luxuriance and waviness behind, that many a girl must envy him for it, and would kiss him for his waterfall, only that the world is so censorious. The growth of his moustache is of a wiry and obstinate character; it will not be repressed, and it persists in maintaining a defiant and fiery aspect. His linen is absolutely immaculate, and his neck-tie, which is, usually, of a lazulite blue, is confined by a jewel of imperial price. Remark what long slender hands he has, the white fingers looking as though they had been constructed specially with a view to presentation rings. When he delivers a joke, he does it with a reserved fire that never fails to provoke a laugh, and when he is impressed with the jokes of others, his laugh is very peculiar, being inward, silent, and accompanied by severe corrugations of his nose. The subject of this rough pen-and-ink sketch is none other than Charles F. Browne, so well known through the length and breadth of the land as "Artemus Ward." His lecture, or "show," as he would call it himself, upon life among the Mormons, is one of the most popular entertainments that has been before the public for years, and his books are selling like "wild-fire" on both sides of the Atlantic. Frequently, in this room, though not often so late at night as this, may be seen the well-known dramatist, Mr. Charles Gaylor, his massive features thrown into deep shade by a very wide-brimmed hat, which, with his fruity complexion, and luxuriant golden hair, gives him quite the air of a portrait by one of the old masters.

Nor is the minstrel element unrepresented here. Most evenings, about ten o'clock, Neil Bryant and his brother, Dan, are sure to drop

in, with complexions so clear, and hands so unsullied, that you would hardly think they had been doing burnt-cork business not ten minutes ago. Dan declines to "go back on" the darkey, though his performance of Irish character would always secure him a place on the regular stage. Charles Henry, the vocalist, is also a frequenter of the De Soto, where, sometimes, on occasions of particular festivity, he contributes to the harmony of the evening with some of the melodies he sings so sweetly. Not unfrequently, either, we have met here with S. C. Campbell, once in the minstrel business himself, but who has, of late, transferred his fine baritone to the lyrical stage. Taking the De Soto altogether, with its association of actors, authors and critics, there is, perhaps, more theatrical gossip to be picked up in it, than in any other of the city resorts.

Further up town, at No. 81 Fourth avenue, near the corner of Tenth street, is the Sir John Falstaff, a tavern having a picture of that jolly Knight over its doorway for a sign. This house is kept by Mr. W. H. Norton, a member of the stock company at Wallack's Theatre, and formerly a partner with H. E. Sharp in the House of Lords. "Mine host" is a handsome, stoutish gentleman, with a remarkably fine head of hair, which, in the characters usually assigned to him at the theatre, relieves him from the superfluity of a wig. Mr. Norton has a fine taste in pictures, his judgment in which, we believe, is due to his having studied art, as a miniature painter, previous to his adoption of the stage for his profession. Often, in the Sir John Falstaff, at night, may be seen actors belonging to the uptown theatres, attachés of the Academy of Music, and the usual variety of character dependent on the shows in general. In fixtures, this hostelry differs but little from some of those already described. The fox's head over the bar imparts somewhat of a sporting character to the place, but then, at the further end of the room, there are many portraits of noted theatrical personages. Among these, there is a good print from Sir Thomas Lawrence's famous picture of John Kemble, in the character of *Coriolanus*.

Still further up town, on Fourth avenue, near Thirteenth street, and just in the rear of Wallack's Theatre, is The Green Room, a small, snug, theatrical tavern, kept by Mr. G. F. Browne, who, like the host last mentioned, is a member of the stock company at Wallack's. Like his house, Mr. Browne is small and snug, the very ideal of a well-fed Englishman, of the duodecimo size. From floor to ceiling, the walls of the double apartment comprising the bar of the Green Room are covered with engravings, photographs, lithographs, and every conceivable style of graph, large and small, of gentlemen and ladies to whom the foot-lights are familiar, and the original green-room a haven of occasional rest. There is hardly an actor or actress of any fame, on either side of the Atlantic, whose portrait is not to be found in this theatrical gallery. The photographs are mostly of the "imperial" standard, and executed in the highest style of the art; and, by any one who wants to familiarize himself with the personal appearance of the leading men and women of the day, theatrically speaking, an hour cannot be better spent than in examining the "living presentments" here collected by our jolly little host of the Green Room. Many members of Wallack's company drop in here of a night, and, in the opera season,



the lyrical stars of the Academy of Music may often be seen here, wetting their mellow whistles with the malt beverages, so indispensable to the production of chest notes.

There are many other places in the city, some of the same class as those just described, others of the French or German kind, to which theatrical men resort frequently at night, when their labors are over, and tired nature is vociferous for its true restorer—balmy drink. One such place we will here briefly touch upon, and that is the extensive basement restaurant, No. 653 Broadway, presided over by Mr. Charles Pfaff. It is a good many years, now, since we first became acquainted with Mr. Pfaff, who then practiced gastronomy in a smaller cave, a block or so further up Broadway. The circle of his customers, at that time, was small and select. There was a primitive air about the old cellar. You should have seen Pfaff himself, in those days, rushing about among his guests with a small child under his arm, just as if, in the hurry of the moment, he had mistaken C. Pfaff, Jr., for a napkin, and was going to wipe the table with him. That child has now blossomed into a handsome boy, of whom his father is justly proud; he may yet be President of the United States. In process of time, a knot of literary men and artists made the discovery of Pfaff's, and the little, old cellar became their regular place of resort. The circle "drew," and their channels for publishing a good thing carried round the name of Pfaff. Then the old cellar was found to be inadequate to the increasing custom of the place, and, for years, Pfaff located himself in a larger one, on Broadway, near Bleecker street. This cave became quite a celebrated resort for artists, critics, actors, and the literary brotherhood at large, having, besides, its large *entourage* of German, French and other foreign custom, which gave a somewhat European character to the place. Later still, our host of the cellar removed his properties to the much larger and more convenient one over which he, at present, despotically reigns. In the rear of this he devised, last summer, a new and attractive feature, by fitting up an open yard in the semblance of an intramural garden, with wonderful trees and shrubs, some of which are real from the root to the height of a foot or so, and were then continued by brush of scenic artist to any height, upon the wall. This place is canopied over with a huge canvas awning, and it is a curious scene to behold Captain Pfaff, when a heavy thunder shower is coming up from leeward, giving the word, as if from the quarter-deck, for all hands to hoist sail, and to see the German waiters going up rigging, and belaying, and hauling in slacks, and letting go sheets, and doing fifty other very salt and maritime things, with a view to getting the piece of canvas into a position for staving off the storm. This is, really, a delicious place of resort on a drowsy summer night, and to it, in addition to the large foreign element, come a number of dramatic critics, and people connected with the neighboring theatres. The Winter Garden, especially, is represented here "when the shades of night prevail;" and why shouldn't it be, seeing that it was by the pencil of a scenic artist belonging to that establishment, that yon gorgeous landscape was dashed off boldly upon the wall, up which, also, Pfaff's climbing plants never could have made their way, but for the illusion wrought by the same magic touch.

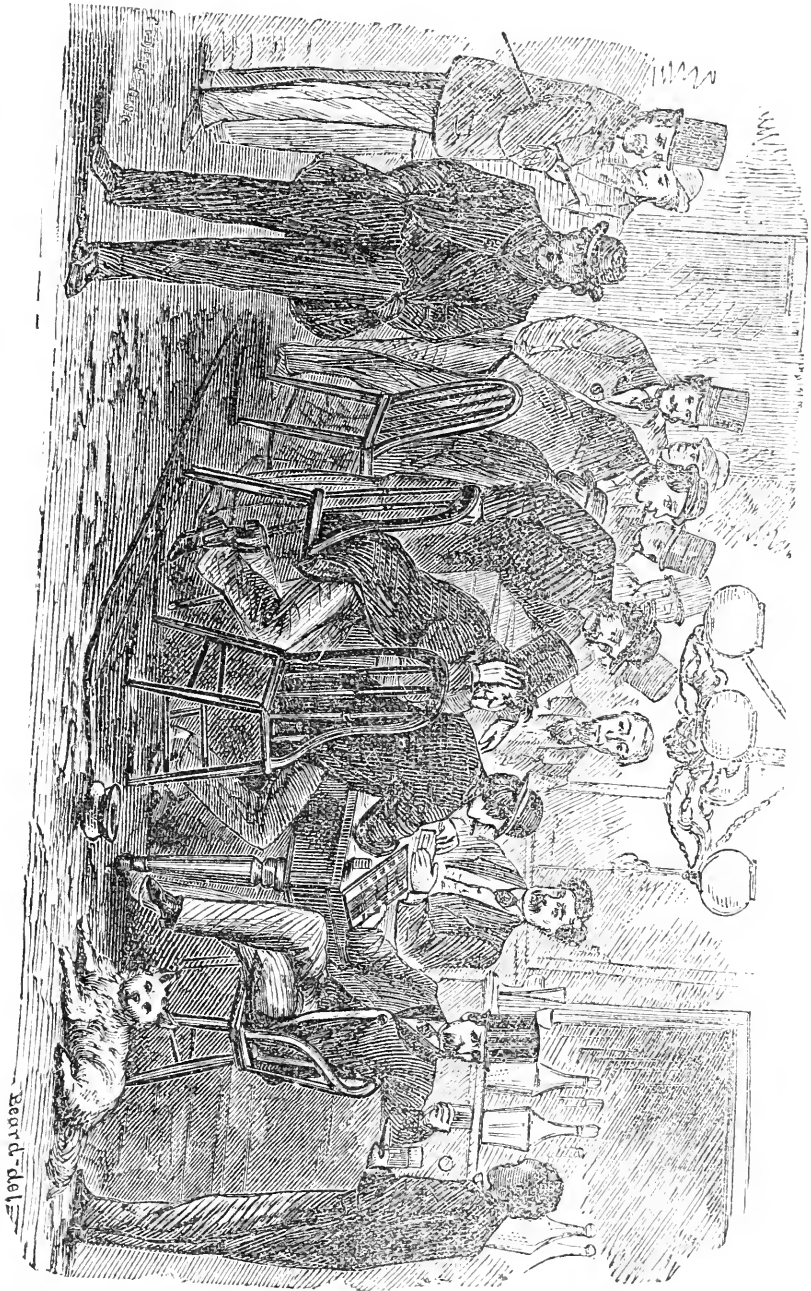
## CHAPTER XV.

## OUR ALL NIGHT EATING HOUSES.

BY A. FLUNKEY.

Not much of an edication, thank ye—not being posted up in the literary way, but have traveled round the world (it was by water, you can take your affydavvy), being born the son of a sea cook, and instructed in my parents' line of business, from roast dog or baby chowder at New Zealand, to beefsteak rare and weal pie, plenty of crust, (which last order always gives me a lively recollection of kittens) while the first renders wisible a nice old gentleman who was short of teeth, among other trifles, and who made the invariable remark, when I was unfortunate enough to wait on him—"Right off the horns. I'll bet my head. I've had my share of misfortunes, roaming round the world like a rolling stone that gathers no moss; but what cooked my goose to a turn was Sarah Jane, whom I wooed and wedded, thinking her an angel, when she turned out the reverse, for she eloped one day with my particular friend, Jenkins, who had the mortal assurance to borrow my best Sunday breeches to do the job in. Instead of letting her slide, as a sensible man would, I took to drinking whiskey straight, and I soon lost my berth in a first class dining saloon, where I was the admiration of the guests, (for nothing short of a steam engine could beat me in giving or taking orders) and was obliged to take a situation at an all-night house in Centre street, kept by a man who was recognized by the public as Pop Clark, and whose ambition never rose above pork and beans and cold corned ham. To be sure, there was a roast chicken in the window, but, bless your unsophisticated heart, it was only a sign. He was preserved like an Egyptian mummy, with pepper and spices, and so old that Samson could not have pulled him apart with a pair of pincers. You can bet your life, when anybody inquired the price of that chicken, he was just sold; but one night some rowdies made a foray on the premises, and the venerable relic disappeared. It was the fowl proceeding that busted up the establishment of Pop Clarke.

Five and twenty years ago, there stood a three story and attic mansion on the corner of Franklin and Centre streets, known far and wide as the Break of Day House. Do I know the Duke of Kaciac? Certainly. Am I acquainted with Count Nocount? To be sure I am. They were prime customers of the Break of Day House, and made fearful havoc on its ham sandwiches and pickled tongues, and then picked their teeth on the steps of the Astor or Globe Hotel. A stranger could have any quality of refreshment he desired at the Break of Day; I've known 'em, Mr. Editor, to mix a dozen kinds of drink's out of the same bottle, and I believe if a man had called for *pate de fois grass*—that's about as near the name as my French will allow, though in plain English, it's nothing more nor less than a pie, made out of the livers of diseased geese—it would have been served up to him at the shortest notice. Booth,



the tragedian, wandered in there one night, and being sociably intoxicated, went through the tent scene of Richard, to the great edification of the crowd, and the girls from Laden and Ketchy's dance-house, who patronized the establishment to a great extent. There was always a lively game of three penny ante bluff going on in the back room, and there were some amiable gentlemen of leisure ever ready to teach the unsophisticated the mysteries of the *little joker*. Now, Mr. Author, you are going to give my experience as a *Flunk-key*; you must do it in a readable sort of a way, for, as I said before, I am mighty short of book-learning, and I am determined never to put a blot on the profession.

My energy and persewérance to get along in the world, I must say, was commendable; I don't think I was ever more industrious in my life than while employed at the Break of Day. My worthy boss gave me all the instruction my merit deserved; I was always ready to take a fourth hand at bluff, and I soon learned to pull from the bottom, and deal short faro out of hand. My ambition was to rise, and such was my tact and talent that I have frequently rung in three cold decks of an evening. Confidence Jake, who was one of our patrons, said I was worthy of a gold medal, and Confidence Jake was a man of experience, and a first class sporter. To be sure, he fetched up to Sing Sing, but wasn't Napoleon sent to St. Helena. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and there was not the difference of one of Butter Cake Dick's crullers, who done a famous all-night business in a cellar on Spruce street, between Nassau and William. There was the next round turn where fortune brought me to, and I must allow that my dignity felt lowered a peg at being ordered about by ragged paper venders, and nothing gave me a gleam of consolation except Jenkins, who came in, one January night, with the toes of his boots out, and rather uncomfortably attired in a linen duster, and who inquired if his credit was good for three butter cakes and a cup of coffee, to which I responded:

"William, where is my Sarah Jane?"

He recognized me, on the instant, as the injured husband whom he had so foully wronged, and muttered through his set teeth, "She's bolted!"

"Now, don't you think you are a nice man for a small tea party?" I suggested, with a withering smile, "to come here and ask tick for grub of a man from whom you stole his wife and Sunday breeches?"

He was positively dumbfounded at this sarcasm, and in that state I seized him by the throat and shook him till his teeth chattered, and finally ended by kicking him into the street, without his making the slightest resistance. Mr. Author, I felt as happy at that moment as if I held four aces against a king full.

Butter Cake Dick did a thriving business, being patronized by all the newsboys about town, and I must say that he was an amiable sort of a boss, having only two weaknesses—inflammatory rheumatism, and a strong desire to go to fancy dress balls in soldier uniform. If a ball of that character was advertised when Dick was obliged to use crutches, it made him decidedly "grapey." Sometimes our class of customers varied to a large extent. I have known aldermen, and politicians of every grade, to drop in at all

hours of the night, and who, no doubt, being stalled on roast turkey and turtle soup, made a banquet on butter cakes and coffee that seemed to agree with their constitutions admirably. At election times, our custom from Tammany Hall alone has often amounted to ten dollars a night. It might have been a little unpleasant for them to set at the same table with the gentleman in hard luck, but who had seen the day he was as good as ever he was; and it must have rankled deep in their patriotic bosoms to hear themselves quoted by the newsboys as third rate "sardines," and they only patronized Dick's saloon because the butter cakes were almost as big as bolivars. What a man couldn't learn at Dick's wasn't worth knowing, for the newsboys are as sharp as steel traps, and what the most of them drop down is a valuable consideration to pick up. I have not the slightest doubt my education was much improved at Butter Cake Dick's, but the best of friends must tear themselves apart, and an increase of salary placed me as a fixture in an all-night house on West Broadway. There was a gambling-room overhead, and a lagerbeer saloon in the cellar, that accommodated lady boarders of questionable morals, for they sang flash songs and indulged in free fights on the most trivial occasions. The windows were set off with red and white curtains, in shape like a fan, and though no one person ever seemed to visit the establishment a second time, I think the Dutch landlord, whom the girls called "Boss," must have laid by money, and I am willing to bet an oyster supper that any fat goose who went in there would be sure to come out a plucked gosling. The sign over his door was "The Sailor's Home, and all Nations' retreat," and I think that most of his patrons were taken in and done for. The business he followed was not quite so extensive then as it is at present, and more poetical names have been adopted since lager became a standing drink. Mercer, Greene and Wooster streets are lined with "Rosebuds," "Emeralds," and even "Bee Hives," with an occasional sprinkling of "Miss Julias," "Lauras" and "Seraphinas" to fascinate the unwary, who are not posted up in that kind of New York luxury. Take one piece of advice from an old Flankey; if you ever want to visit such establishments from curiosity, leave your wallet at home on the piano, or you'll wish you had. Some of the lady charmers have very attractive fingers, and can weed a pocket-book much better than they know how to darn stockings. As I have informed you before, Mr. Author, there was a gambling-room kept over our restaurant, and the proprietor was a short, thick-set man, who dealt "faro" at twelve dollars and a half limits, and who was known among his companions as "Slippery Jarvey." I never see any one pull the cards from the box with equal dexterity, and when the bank made a winning deal, to hear him talk horse was the most refreshing conversation, I think, I ever had the pleasure to listen to. "There never was a race," says Jarvey, "that came out so even before; in fact, gentlemen, it was neck and neck clean up to the judge's stand, and there wasn't a hair's breadth between the brown filly and the grey horse; (bet nine loses, gentlemen, and the ace wins—not a cop on the ace.) Let me see, gentlemen, where was I in my story.

"I don't know where you was," said the player, who had gone

for his last check on the nine; but I know where I wish you had been sent before you commenced the last deal, and that is to ——." It's against my morals to mention the place, Mr. Author, but I never heard of anybody wearing an overcoat in that country. "Jarvey" paid no attention to such compliments, of which he received a large supply from most of the players, in the classic language of West Broadway. When he made a losing deal, he barr'd horse and talked sick headache, and I have known hard-hearted individuals, who bucked against the "tiger," wish that it might fall in two pieces or might split apart, at the very moment his pile was lowering with the most fearful rapidity. The "Tapis Franc" was a jolly house in its day, but the West Broadway crib could give it a chalk in the game.

I recollect one night, when Spanish Joe was broke, he made a remark that beat any mathematics that I had ever heard of. He had been watching the pot, and it win through the deal without any cent on either the six, seven or eight. He says, while the tears stood in his eyes, "there, if any man had a put down a tin whistle in the pot, it would have run to a wagon load of fish horns." Such a tact for figures showed that Joe's education had not been trifled with. He was an industrious and worthy young man, with an ambition to pull from the bottom that I never saw excelled. He was never a Member of Congress, wore a white neck-tie that made him look like a parson, and died with a hasty consumption. He had a lively appetite for oysters when in luck, and complained of indigestion when he was dead broke. One day, Death caught him on the turn, and he pegged out.

When the game up stairs was red hot, the gay gamboliers would sometimes set four and twenty hours at a stretch, and it was about the only thing that I had against my situation; I was continually compelled to be running up and down stairs with their orders. It seemed to me that they eat, drank and slept at the table, and I have often almost let the dishes drop, with laughter, to hear the expressions they would make use of when they were bucking in hard luck, "There I go again, flop on the turn." "There I come again, Mr. Dealer; pay me! pay me! Ten's a bet, and nary cent to it. There I go again on the bet ace." "There comes up my gentleman Jack. Jack Spratt would eat no fat, and his wife would eat no lean. Pay me! pay me, Mr. Dealer." "Tickle me, tickle me, tickle me, do; tickle me, and I'll tickle you." This was about the usual run of the conversation at Jarvey, Skinner & Co.'s, and things went on smooth enough, till one night an unfortunate young man, who had not made a winning deal for some weeks, and who, during that time, had been a heavy loser, took it into his foolish head to blow his brains out, and what is most remarkable, they landed on the ace king square, where not a check was down, though it win plumb through, and against an unlimited game a dollar would have paroled to a hundred thousand as easy as winking. At the moment the pistol went off, I had just entered the room with a dozen raw, two toasts and a beefsteak and onions, but the gentlemen who gave the orders disappeared before the smoke of the pistol cleared away, and I found myself surrounded by half a dozen "Peelers," and one of them demanded of me, who had done the foul and bloody deed.

"Hissself, I reckon ; he blowed out his brains because the cards run rough ; the chaps who patronize the saloon have all 'cut their lucky,' but, at any rate, I had nothing to do with it, and was only filling some orders that came down stairs to the saloon where I am employed."

They whispered together for a moment, as though they were plotting mischief, and the same man who spoke before said, "Young man, we will have to detain you as a witness till after the Coroner holds an inquest, unless you can give bail for your appearance at court. He may have blowed out his own brains, or he may not ; I rather think he has, but that don't alter the case. You must put on your coat, and go with us to the station-house."

I felt comparatively easy, for I knew that the boss could not well dispense with my services, and if he did go back on me, why I had "Confidence Jake" still left, who was ready to go bail for a highway robbery or murder for, say, the sum of twenty-five dollars down on the nail. The boss stuck to me like a true man, and as there was no charge against me (having entered the room a second or two too late), I was not an important witness, and was discharged immediately after the coroner's jury gave in their verdict of Suicide.

As I have always had a lively impression of ghosts, I did not feel easy in my situation after the occurrence took place, and I believe the gamblers were as superstitious as myself, for they immediately removed their game to other quarters.

Without this impediment I was suited well enough, for I used to have lots of fun with the girls who visited the theatres, and we done our most thriving trade with that class between the hours of one and two in the morning. The boss liked their custom, for they invariably paid promptly for what they had, except they came in "lush," after having indulged in a fight with their lovers, when their cuttings up sometimes beat tiger cats all to nothing. Some of them looked the most delicate creatures in the world, but eat and drank like 'longshoremen.

One night, in Thomas street, a young girl who used to visit our place was murdered with a hatchet. The coroner's jury could not make out who was the guilty party who done the deed, but suspicion always pointed to her lover, who had been trying some time to get rid of her, but which act, on his part, she strongly opposed. Story writers have always maintained that Helen J—— was beautiful and possessed a good education, when the fact is, Mr. Author, she could scarcely write her own name, had a pug nose, and drank like a fish. I only mention these facts to show how a story stretches under extraordinary circumstances, for I deplored her sad fate as much as my feelings would allow, since Sarah Jane blunted 'em against the fair sex, and I must say she was good-hearted and spent her money free, and never took a drink at our saloon without asking me to have something along.

The city has changed greatly, Mr. Author, since I first took up the occupation of a night-waiter. Twenty years ago, there were two large dining saloons open all night in Chatham street, at which lodgers were also accommodated at the rate of twelve and a half cents per night, and as some twenty or thirty were generally stowed away in each room, if a stranger escaped in his shirt in the morn-

ing, he might consider himself in a comfortable state of convalescence. No tamer bed-bugs existed in New York; the rooms smelled of liver and fried onions, and the houses were so well patronized by "knucks" and "cracksmen" that the landlords never took any responsibility. If you asked "Are all things safe?" they would reply, "You must run your chances, and keep a sharp look-out; Do you suppose we can afford to keep watchmen at twelve and a half cents per night?" The biggest trouble I ever saw two men in was at one of those houses. A "knuck" had seized upon one of each of their boots, and there did not seem any way to accommodate the matter, as the smallest man of the two wore number sevens, while the larger individual could not get along with less than number twelves. There was another house, in the vicinity of the old Franklin Theatre, where a motley crowd used to assemble three nights in the week, and raffle for poultry. The proprietor was a fat man, and one of the most thrifty and prudent individuals I ever met with. His percentage was a quarter out of each pot, and a chance, so that he generally had all the money and most of the poultry about two o'clock in the morning. The man who attended to the game for him was called "Singing Bill," and, as he shared with the landlord, he wore the glossiest hat and finest clothes that the tailor could make up. Something occurred to close the game, and "Singing Bill," having plenty of leisure time, commenced bucking against the "tiger," and such was his hard fortune, that in a month's space his extra wardrobe had dwindled down to a pair of shoe strings. Talking of shoe strings puts me in mind of Chauncey J——, one of the first confidence men of the age. A comrade, one day, came into the Tapis Franc, where Chauncey was engaged at the game of "faro." "How do you get along, old top?" said his friend.

"Splendid," says Chauncey; "I have just run a shoe string up to ten dollars."

The next deal the cards ran rough, and his friend again inquired, "How do you fight your men now, Chauncey?"

"Rocky," was the reply; "I have just run ten dollars down to a shoe string."

The Mercer and Greenestreet eating houses are patronized by the girls of the town and their lovers. They are mostly fitted up with private boxes, where those who visit can have a sociable conversation all alone by themselves, about the arts and sciences, the drama, or any other refreshing subject. The price of each dish is about double what it is at Taylor's or Delmonico's. It is about as singular that it takes from ten to a dozen damsels to tend the "Rainbow" and "Forget-me-not" segar saloons in Canal street, although I am willing to bet that the boxes in the window are only a stall, and that, with so many clerks, they never have more than a thousand segars on hand.

Along the avenues, private box saloons can be found at most of the street corners above Sixteenth street (I've worked in several of 'em, and know the ropes). Such bewitching creatures, of sweet seventeen, as I have seen going into them places with venerable old gentlemen, as any outsider would have taken to be their respectable papas, when, in fact, they was everything else; why, I



couldn't begin to count 'em in a week of Sundays. I can't say that the damsels are delicate, as a general thing. I recollect once serving a charming young creature, who had a bald-headed old fogey in tow, with six pigs' feet and two plates of pickled tripe—I don't say nothing of the whiskey skins she punished in the meantime. They was beyond counting.

The gentleman's bill was only seven dollars, and he had the audacity to grumble; I had half a mind to punch his venerable head, and I'll bet I could have licked him if he had been twice as old. The lovely creature quieted him by saying the bill was just right (bless her pretty pigs' feet appetite), and he went off with her like a lamb to the slaughter. I think, as the son of a sea-cook, I am no disgrace to the profession, and I can cut, carve and come again with the best of 'em; why, I even paid something handsome to attend lectures on the art of cooking, given by a French Count in distress, who was obliged to distribute his education in that manner, at a quarter a pop. What he told us about the noble Rum-ones and their happy appetites astonished us more than any Twenty-seventh street Ghost ever could. you can bet your pile on that. He told us about one Vittleus, who hankered after nightingales' tongues and peacocks' brains to such an alarming extent, that he run through twenty millions in the course of a year. And then there was Hell Gobleus, who made the people do all their work in the night time and sleep through the day. (Bully, that, noble Rum-one, for the night saloons), and who eat himself up in three years, for he didn't have a single nickle left to buy a red herring.

There is a heap of difference, Mr. Author, in eating-house customers, and as the saying is, "when one is in Turkey, he has to do as the Turkeys do." I picked up a flunkey's education, though I do say it myself, astonishing quick; I knowed, as soon as my eye was fixed on a gentleman with a red neckacherf, yaller spotted vest and a crape around his tile, that if he fancied fish-balls, he would order, in the dulcet tones of Mackerelville, a plate of Siamese Twins, to the great horror of listening countrymen. Everybody knows that pork and beans goes by the name of "woodcock" in the most aristocratic houses, but I doubt if there are many aware that Hash is known to all the rounders as "boned turkey," "corduroy" and "West Broadway." "Give us a plate of Tennessee, and be quick about it," means nothing more nor less than hot corn bread, and "Irish goose" is codfish, baked or boiled. The appearance of night eating-houses waries as much, Mr. Editor, as the changes of the thermometer. Down Water street way, the signs are generally painted with a spread eagle on one end and a ship on the other. Italian images generally say grace over the pig's trotters and pickled tripe, and there are lots of pictures around of Black-eyed Susan and the Sailor Ashore. In my youthful days of happy innocence, my parent and myself used to board at the Water street cellars while the ship was being discharged. Among the English houses I have occasionally taken a turn as a flunkey, but I can't say that toasted cheese and 'alf-and-'alf agreed with my constitution. It would have had to have been as strong as that of the United States to stand any length of time those red-faced John Bulls with husky voices, who

generally take a sociable drink by themselves, and roar out "waiter!" when they want a segar-lighter.

I can't say as I'm partial to lady flunkeys either, and it's worse if they are handsome and have winning ways. It is astonishing how a pair of blue eyes and a waterfall will entice the gents to spread themselves in the way of orders. I know a cove whose ambition never soared above corned beef and cabbage with one of my sex, that would lavish his money in the most ridiculous manner on oyster pie and plum both kinds, whenever he was waited upon by a feminine. I am sorry to say that the boss took a base advantage of his weakness, and sent the most fascinating crinoline we had on hand to take his orders. Flunkeys have their feelings, and mine have been hurt on several occasions. I recollect that a young man requested me, in the hearing of a couple of hundred diners, to drive another chicken through his bowl of soup; and the stale joke of diving for a bean is familiar to every flunkey's ear.

Where do I work now? why, at a Broadway saloon, bang up on the square, and no private boxes. I have risen in the world, and the rolling stone has begun to gather a small morsel of moss. Sarah Jane is a phantom that has nearly vanished from my memory. I am in with a policeman on our beat, and the other day he said he was happy to inform me that Jenkins had taken a six months' residence on Blackwell's Island as an intolerable wagrant. Cuss him! No I won't; 'tis noble to forgive. I have cut the Duke of Kaciac, and the Count Nocount is doing five years at Sing Sing for "tapping a till." Coming, sir—yes, sir—Beef a la mode, spring chicken, Sheder crabs, Porter House steak, large bottle of Heidsieck. There's an order for a small tea party, and the way we do business at our saloon. When I receive such commands, Mr. Author, I am thankful to kind fortune that I stand in the proud position of a *Flunkey*.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE PUGILISTS.

THE slang peculiar to the class of "sports" who profess the "noble art of self-defence," is almost a dialect in itself, and its roots are difficult to trace. For example, it is not easy to guess why the tavern to which the stern pugilist resorts, should be called a "drum," in his *lingua franca*. He calls his legs "pins," and there is some obvious comparison in that. His nose is a "conk," his chest a "bread-basket," his mouth a "potato-trap." In the following brief account of the fighting man of New York, however, and of his nightly haunts, we shall restrict ourself to as little of his dialect as possible, and stick to the good old principle of calling a spade a spade.

Houston street, east of Broadway, has long been a favored spot for the proprietor of the "drum" pugilistic, wherein to hang out his painted lantern, on which there usually appears the fancy name by which his establishment is known. Among the "profession" there is a certain aspiration after originality in these fancy names. Havily

a year ago there was a "drum" in East Houston street, kept by the late Harry Lazarus, the sign-board of which bore the cabalistic formula, X-10-U-8—or, in plain English, "Extenuate;" the transformation of which verb into a noun demonstrative of a "drum" is rather a puzzler to the inquiring mind. "The Extenuate" came to a calamitous and untimely end. It was but too often the resort of self-styled "pugilists" of the worst and most dangerous class, though Harry himself was a well-behaved little fellow, who had sufficient confidence in his fistie powers to dispense with the use of "cutlery," as a general thing. One night—or at early morning, rather—somewhere about the New Year time, certain of these roughs entered the "Extenuate" just as the proprietor was about to close up for the night, and one of them, named Barney Friery, after a few words of altercation with Harry Lazarus, foully and savagely murdered him on the spot, by plunging a knife into his neck. This was one of those awful scenes which any man may be liable to witness, if his spirit of investigation leads him to explore such haunts at the dead hours of the night. Some four or five years previous to this, Harry was keeping a "drum" in Chatham street. It was about New Years time then, too, when he had retired, at an early hour in the morning, leaving his barkeeper to shut up the place. Just then three or four roughs entered, and called for liquor, but the barkeeper refused to supply them with any, saying that the bar was closed. Upon this they attacked the young fellow, and would probably have killed him had not Harry, roused by the noise, made his appearance on the scene. Singling out the biggest of the roughs, young Lazarus gave him a slight inking of pugilistic science by knocking out a few of his front teeth, in less time than it takes to tell. The cowardly brutes who would have killed the barkeeper now tried to make the best of their escape, but were all arrested by the police by the time Lazarus had "doubled up" their leader, whose face was a picture when he made his appearance in court, next morning. In disposing of the case, the police magistrate passed a well-merited encomium on Lazarus for the pluck and skill displayed by him in defending his "castle."

One of the most characteristic places now in the city, perhaps, in the way of pugilistic resort, is the house kept by Harry Hill, in East Houston street, near Crosby. Hill is an Englishman, who has been for some years in this country, and was long known here as one of the best wrestlers in the ring. He is rather under the middle stature—about five feet seven inches in height, perhaps—very heavily built in the shoulders, which are somewhat round, as is often the case with wrestlers. We should judge him to be about forty years of age. Hill does not wrestle now, owing, we believe, to a sprain suffered by him in one of his legs. His last contest was with Prickett, the New Jersey champion, which, if we remember rightly, resulted in a "draw," owing to some disputed point with regard to the rules of the "grip."

On entering Hill's establishment you have to flank a screen, which, standing inside the door, opposes your direct entrance. Having executed this manœuvre, you find yourself in a good sized room, one side of which is occupied by the bar, which is very well fitted up with beer-pumps and all the other means and appliances

proper to such depots. Interspersed among the decanters and glasses on the bar-shelves are a number of photographs of fighting men, and well-known characters connected with the ring. The side of the room opposite the bar is taken up with a number of barrels, which impart a cellary appearance of plenty to the scene. There are several small tables in the room, on the centre one of which most of the sporting and some of the daily papers are to be found. On the walls there are many sporting prints of former "mills," and portraits of men who travel successfully on their muscle. At night most of the tables are occupied by men connected with the ring—fighting men, trainers, backers, and sporting men generally. Observe that wiry-looking man talking with Harry Hill. He would not, probably, weigh more than one hundred and thirty-two pounds, if in fighting trim, but he is one of the most scientific fighters in the country, and a hard man to tackle. That is "Dooney" Harris, an Englishman, who has been in this country some two or three years. Notice what a fighting head he has, with eyes far apart and sloping upwards, wolf-like, and a strong, hard-set lower jaw. One night when we saw him there—it must be a year or two since—there sat over at that table, yonder, an awful looking "pug" with an enormous head, the facial portion of which was ornamented with numerous bumps and gashes in black, blue, and yellow, thrown partly into the shade by the slouching brim of his "wide-awake" hat. That was Patsey Marley, who had just been defeated by Harris, to whose rapid and straight hitting he owed the decorations of his countenance. There was high altercation going on in circles distributed about the bar-room. Harris appeared to be particularly excited, and we soon found that the trouble had arisen out of the application to him, by Marley, on the morning of the fight, of the epithet "duffer." Marley asserted that by this objectionable *sobriquet* Harris was known in English pugilistic circles. Harris repudiated the epithet. He would not be called "Duffer" Harris. He would punch the head of anybody who would apply to him an epithet so opprobrious. He meandered about the room, with his hands in his trousers' pockets, seeking for somebody who would be rash enough to "duffer" him, but, as no such ill-advised person happened just then to be on hand, he soon subsided to a cigar and a glass of ale, and harmony was restored.

Hill is frequently selected as stake-holder, when a fight is on the *tapis*, and, on these occasions, his place is usually a scene of much bustle at night. When the preliminaries of a fight have been arranged, it is customary to get up a sparring match, for the benefit of the men who are going into training. Mozart Hall, on Broadway, used to be the regular place for these sparring exhibitions, but the "pugs" of late have deserted it and sought other fields, a hall in Forsyth street being now the scene generally selected by them for their "little mills." It is at one of these glove-matches that the "fancy" are to be seen in all their glory. Tickets are usually sold for half a dollar, and you will observe, as you go in, large posters at the door of the place, setting forth a programme of the sports of the evening. When the place of performance is built like a theatre—as old Mozart Hall is—a barrier of posts and ropes is placed along the front of the stage, which thus assumes somewhat the ap-

pearance of a "ring." The benches are usually pretty well filled with men of the P. R. type—some of them what may be called "swell roughs," while a great majority of them are roughs of a lower class, unwashed, cravatless, and clad in dirty red shirts, long, coarse black frock coats, with trousers to match, and heavy cow-skin boots, on which the art of the boot-black does not seem ever to have thrown a transient gloss. The swell rough wears better clothes. He affects a *neglige* style of apparel: shirt, loose sack, of thick woolen stuff; trousers of a similar material, generally of a yellow tan-color, cut excessively pegtop, and having a couple of pearl buttons stitched on the outside seam, at the ankle. His hat is of the stovepipe pattern, with a verry narrow brim, and so shiny that it looks as if Bridget had mistaken it for a joint of a stovepipe, and "done it over" with black-lead. He wears green kid gloves, and his cravat is frequently barred with all the colors of the rainbow. His hair is closely trimmed, and so is his moustache, which is invariably of a purply black hue, even though Nature may have ordained it to be a fiery red.

The part of usher, or master of the ceremonies, at these meetings, has been held, for many years past, by a well-known character called "Old Bill Tovee." Mr. Tovee's nationality we should judge to be English, with a suspicion of Irish extraction. Externally, Mr. Tovee is not a very pugilistic looking person. He is somewhat advanced in years, and wears a certain agricultural look that impresses the beholder with ideas of peace rather than of war. His tall old "beaver" hat is generally much the worse for wear, and is worn at a careless angle upon his occiput. His clothes are of no particular fashion, but they look as if they had seen better days, and may be described in general terms as "rusty." Mr. Tovee has had a large experience of ring matters, and his decision on knotty points involving "foul" or "fair," is generally looked upon with respect by the sporting characters. In matters pugilistic he has his own theories, and is a great advocate for glove fights, that is, not for sparring matches proper, but for regular hammer-and-tongs prize fights, in which the combatants have their "mawleys" encased in the "mufflers." How far old Mr. Tovee may be influenced in his promulgation of this theory, by the fact that he manufactures, or at least furnishes, such articles for the P. R., we have no means of judging; but it is certain that glove fights have not as yet become popular with the "fancy," to whom, if anything, the addition of brass "knuckle-dusters" would be more acceptable than any invention calculated to mollify a blow.

As the time for commencing the exercises of the evening approaches, sundry young men—some of them mere boys—may be seen straggling down among the benches and making their way on to the stage, behind which they at once disappear. These are some of the novices and aspirants, by whose efforts the spectators are shortly to be edified. Jokes are levelled at them from the benches, as they get over or under the ropes, and if one of them happens to get tripped up in crossing the barrier, great is the hilarity indulged in at his expense. Presently the spectators grow impatient, and there is a great stamping of feet, on which old Mr. Tovee makes his appearance on the stage, and, announcing that the sports of the

evening will commence with a set-to between, say, Larry McCarthy and Jem Kerrigan, introduces these young sports to the public, and retires to the back of the stage. In all the sparring between the first two or three couples who set-to, there is usually more fight than science displayed, and the spectator who comes expecting to witness real art is generally somewhat disappointed. But there will be something better by and by. To vary the amusements, old Mr. Tovee now announces that Mr. Harry Hill has kindly volunteered to exhibit his dexterity in playing with the Indian clubs, two sets of which are produced upon the stage, one pair weighing twelve pounds each, the other thirty-five. These last are tremendous looking bludgeons, and their appearance produces a sensational buzz among the benches. Mr. Hill now makes his bow, and, taking up the smaller pair of clubs, walks with them to the centre of the stage. He has divested himself of coat and waistcoat, and the sleeves of his checked shirt are rolled up so as to show the red flannel one underneath. Round his strong loins a handkerchief is loosely tied, merely to carry out the traditional idea of "girding up." He plays with the twelve pound clubs for a while, just as any ordinary person might with a pair of tenpins, and his evolutions with them are very graceful and easy. Then he pauses for a while, and, seizing one of the big clubs, poises it for a moment high in the air, after which he sends it whirling round his head and over his shoulders with a dexterity and strength that never fail to elicit shouts of applause. Catching up the other club, he now makes both gyrate in duplicate movements that require great exercise of skill and muscular strength. The exertion is evidently very great, and when Hill lays down the clubs and retires, you are likely to think that he has contributed his full quota to the sports of the evening. When the applause elicited by this feat has subsided, somebody in the boxes espies a well-known character leaning over one of the back benches, whom he salutes loudly with a "How are you, King of Clubs?" and there is immediately a torrent of "hi! hi!" from all parts of the house. The personage alluded to is a very important one among the sporting fraternity, for whom he manufactures those clubs, which have nearly superseded dumbbells in the gymnasiums and schools of muscle. Sim Kehoe—for that is his name—is a shortish, muscular man, of wiry build, and with a face decidedly of the Hibernian fighting cast. His appearance by day must be familiar to many, as he traverses the highways and byways, with a pair, or sometimes two pair, of *lignum vite* bludgeons upon his shoulders. Sim is of Irish origin, having been brought to this country while very young. He has worked at several things in his time, but has finally settled down into his present occupation, out of which he bids fair to realize a fortune, now that physical training is receiving the attention it deserves.

The next introduction, by old Mr. Tovee, is probably young Dick Hill, son of the great clubbist. This versatile young gentleman, who may be about nine or ten years old, is also an adept with the clubs, a light pair of which he swings with much grace and adroitness. He is also of a dramatic turn, and makes his appearance in the course of the evening in a negro character, with corked face, and the collar of his striped shirt reaching to his temples, in which

guise he treats the audience to a negro song and dance. When he runs off the stage after this performance, you will note how like his father he is in build.

The wind-up of the evening is always a set-to between two athletes of real science and "grit"—for instance, Bill Davis and Jim Dunn—who, on such occasions, generally appear in regular ring costume—light undershirt, drawers, and long stockings, with laced ankle-boots. This set-to always excites intense interest, and the straight hits and quick stops are followed by thunders of applause. On one of these occasions, we remember that the combatants were the redoubtable Joe Coburn and the burly Mike Norton, known in ring circles as "Crow." To another "ring" has the latter transferred his abilities now, for is not "Crow" Norton Alderman of the Third District, and, not unfrequently, occupant of the magisterial bench? Thus it is that virtue ever hath its reward.

Among the other places of resort to which the pugilists tend when the shades of night prevail, we will mention the hostelry kept by Izzy Lazarus, in Centre street, near Grand. The house is called the Eagle Tavern, if we remember rightly. It is painted green on the outside, and the swinging sign at the door is a good portrait of the obese host, in the character of Sir John Falstaff, which he could easily make up "without stuffing," to use a theatrical expression. Izzy Lazarus is an Englishman, and, as his name suggests, of the ancient Hebrew race. He is of shortish stature, but of such immense girth as to weigh something over three hundred pounds. On entering his bar-room, you will observe an oil painting, representing a young man in fighting trim and attitude, naked from the waist up, and displaying good physical developments. This is a portrait of Izzy, himself, whose fighting weight in those days of his triumph was no more than one hundred and thirty-two pounds. Who would think it, to look at him now? Many a time we have seen Izzy, however, in his present obese condition, "sail in" with the gloves, after a fashion that made his younger and slimmer antagonist look out for himself. The most scientific sparring we remember to have seen in this country, used to be displayed in the provincial exhibitions given by him with his two boys, Harry and Johnny, both of them, at that time, light weights of great skill and promise. A feature connected with the "drum" of Izzy Lazarus is the "free and easy" held there on certain nights of the week. "Robert Smith, Chairman; Charley Carson will face him," is the announcement on a card of one of these entertainments, that now lies before us. The "free and easy" here is usually a very crowded affair, at which some good singing is to be heard, and a great deal of bad. Through a hazy atmosphere of beer and smoke, the ponderous form of the host himself may often be seen, as, with his head thrown back, he rolls out from his enormous chest some ditty picked up by him in other days and latitudes. Some of the best-known men of the pugilistic ring are usually to be seen of an evening at the hostelry of stout old Izzy.

Joe Coburn, who tried so hard to get up a fight with the English champion, Jem Mace, but failed in the attempt, keeps the "White House," in Grand street, a place to which the members of the P. R. very frequently resort. The bar-room is a large and well-fitted one,

with portraits of the host himself, and of other sporting men. Coburn is a north of Ireland man, tall, and of exceedingly athletic build. His face is not distinctly that which usually denotes the fighting man, because the bridge of his nose remains in the condition in which nature originally built it—a thing rare in the tribe of Pug. Nevertheless there is, in his small eye, the same lurking gleam of pugnacity that we have observed in many four-footed creatures of rapacious instincts. Joe's well-known pugnacity causes good order to reign in his bar of a night, as he has a rather uncere- monious way about him with brawlers. Outside, his proclivities get him into many a scrape. Not long since, we visited his "drum" one night, and, not seeing him behind his bar, made inquiries about him. He was laid up, we were informed, with a very bad hand, brought on by his knuckles coming in contact with the teeth of some individual obnoxious to him. Rats and other vermin are said to have a poisonous quality in their teeth, and it is just possible that the gentleman smitten on the mouth by Mr. Joseph Coburn might have been properly classed with such. There are a good many "vermin" in the haunts frequented by the New York pugilists at night.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE "MEDIUMS."

SOME of the persons who come under the above heading pluralize their denomination into *media*—which is surprisingly correct Latin for people whose English is oftener ungrammatical than otherwise. For ourselves, we prefer to use the word in its English form, and shall continue to do so, even should a committee of pedagogues wait upon us with the information that *alba* is the proper plural of the universally adopted word *album*.

Well, then, the so-called mediums of New York City are so numerous and so widely distributed, that a good-sized book, not to speak of a brief chapter, would hardly be equal to the dealing out of the justice that is due to them. We have no reason to doubt that there are many, many persons whose profession of the doctrine of Spiritualism is sincere, for it would be far too sweeping an assertion to declare that all who believe in the "new religion" must necessarily be impostors. In its religious aspect, the subject is not one for treatment in these pages; but in the wide field cleared by it for imposition and quackery of all sorts, we see a corner for our "Night Side," and to this we shall confine ourselves.

The public at large know but little of the numerous *séances* held nightly in private circles, for such bracing exercises as "manifestations" and "tests." There is more money spent upon delusions of this kind in New York than we should like to name a figure for—numerous wealthy persons, of jaded minds, having in their pay impostors of the "medium" stripe, who make large incomes by preying on the soft brains of the credulous. To such circles as these admission is obtainable by special invitation only, and, as we have never yet had such a courtesy extended to us, we shall furnish our



readers with but one peep at a *séance* of the kind, which was presented to us by one whom we shall designate by the initial "N."

The scene lies in a large and elegantly furnished mansion in a street not far from Madison Square. The time is about ten o'clock at night, and there are some fifty guests assembled to see and hear the wonderful performances of a young man who professes to have intercourse with the spirit world, and who is a *protégé* of the master of the house. Most of the persons assembled are believers in Spiritualism, but among them are half a dozen skeptics who come to look sharp after humbug, and are determined not to be imposed upon.

One end of the large drawing-room has been fitted up with a lecture desk, and the lecturer of the evening is the *protégé* of whom we have already spoken—a young man of some five or six and twenty, fair and delicate in complexion as a girl, and wearing a slight blonde moustache. His lecture, which consists of the common-places generally delivered by the itinerant professors of the occult science, is spoken with a good show of earnestness, also with a decidedly English accent, the docking of the aspirator being as conspicuous in some words as their laying on is in others. But the lecture is only a prologue to the entertainment. The real feature of the evening is a performance on the *cornet à pistons*, for which purpose the lecturer announces that he has secured the aid of no less a familiar than the spirit of the late Herr Kœnig!

The arrangements for the performance were to be in this wise. The lecturer was to be tied with a rope to the arm-chair in which he sat, by a committee of three gentlemen selected from the party. The cornet was to be placed on the floor at a distance of several feet from him, and between him and the audience. Then the gas was to be shut entirely off, the master of the house pledging himself that it should not be turned on again until the lecturer himself gave a preconcerted signal. All this was done in order and to the satisfaction of the committee. The instrument was then handed around for inspection. It was a superb one of English manufacture, richly mounted in silver, but in no way differing, as to make, from the ordinary cornet. When all was ready the lights were put out, and, after a minute of breathless expectation, during which a pin might have been heard to fall, the low, dulcet cadence of the "Bridal Waltzes"—one of Kœnig's most masterly pieces—thrilled upon the assemblage with a sense akin to fear. The tone and the execution were such as to leave no doubt on the minds of most of those present that the instrument was touched by no earthly lips. Ladies were sobbing in their pocket-handkerchiefs. Strong men were pale and felt a lifting tendency at the roots of their hair. The strain ceased; a low whistle was heard, and, in a moment, the apartment was again in a blaze of light. There sat the lecturer, looking very much exhausted, as one who had endured a terrible dream. Tied hand and foot he sat, with every knot just where it had been put, and every coil of the rope. His wrists and ankles were blue with the strain, and it was only after swallowing a draught of iced water that he recovered the use of his speech. The excitement among the party was intense, and "N" declares his belief that more than one young lady present would have married the bewitching medium on the spot, if he had only given her the chance.

But "N" was not so well satisfied in his mind about the Kœnig performance as many of the young ladies and most of the old gentlemen were. Nevertheless, he expressed such gratification with it, that the gentleman of the house invited him to attend a repetition of it, which was to be given a few evenings after. This invitation "N" gladly accepted, meanwhile revolving in his mind some plan for testing the spiritual powers of the fascinating young medium—who, by the by, protested that he never could blow so much as a single note upon the cornet.

When the evening of the performance arrived, "N" managed, as a skeptic, to have himself put on the committee. The cornet was handed round for inspection as before, and "N" himself placed it on the floor at its proper distance from the medium. The same delicious strains were heard as upon the previous evening. The lights shone out again, and "N," amid the murmurs of applause that arose from the assembly, took the young medium by the hand as if to congratulate him, and led him forward. What was the astonishment of the spectators when they saw that the fair moustache of the fascinating young adventurer had turned to a jetty blackness, and that he had something like a black tuft on his lower lip! "N," cruel, practical joker that he was, had rubbed the mouthpiece of the cornet with a little moistened lampblack, which fully accounted for "the milk in the cocoa-nut;" and now, drawing a small looking glass from his pocket, he held it before the performer who, far from being abashed at his detection, brazened the thing out, and, in an impromptu lecture, attributed the affair to the intervention of evil spirits. It might be supposed that the master of the house where this circumstance took place would have been disabused by it of any confidence in his chosen medium, whom, however, he continued to maintain, in blind faith, for some time after, until the fellow swindled him out of a large sum of money and decamped from the city. This imposter was stated to have been a deserter from the band of some English regiment, and he has since been seen in the orchestra of some theatre or circus on the western circuit, playing upon the instrument which he handled with nearly the skill of a Kœnig.

So much for a *séance* among the spiritualists of the "upper ten." Now let us take a turn among the professionals who "do their spiritings" after a fashion not quite so refined.

Starting from a central part of Broadway, we take a turn westward, which leads us, in a short time, to a street bearing a reputation the reverse of saintly. This house—a brick one, of tolerably respectable appearance—must be the one we are in search of, for pasted on the window there is a printed slip, containing the name of a certain family of mediums, who profess to do strange things by the aid of spirits. There is a man standing in the doorway, and he ushers us into a small room on the ground floor, where he requests us to seat ourselves and remain until the performance commences. The room is very poorly furnished, and on the walls there are three or four cheap lithographic portraits of the mediums who rent the place. Some eight or ten persons have already arrived, and are seated about the room, looking at each other with inquiring eyes. Some of them are women—one young and comely, the others elderly and plain. There is a tall, thin man of fifty, with a frowsy beard,

a hollow chest and a very bad cough. Presently this man opens a conversation with another near him. He says that he has been a member of many sects in his time, and came to be an atheist at last, but that the manifestations of Spiritualism have lately convinced him that he has a soul. He has gone through all the mysteries of table-rapping and summoning "spirits from the vasty deep," and is in great conceit with himself about a luminous hand that appeared to him one night in his own house—"a hand with a *hawlo* of light about it," as he expresses it himself. The good-looking young lady shudders at this, and says she would not, for the world, see such things if she was alone. A skeptical gentleman asks the one with the cough whether he had touched the luminous hand, to see whether it was attached to an arm and that to a body. He answers that he had not, because he did not consider it safe to tamper with such things. There is a provincial-looking man of the party, who is much inclined to believe in spiritual agency, although he has seen but little, as yet, of the wonders worked by the mediums. He has been posting himself on the subject of necromancy and legerdemain, and narrates several anecdotes about the Hindoo and Chinese jugglers, whose performances, he thinks, must be attributed to the aid of spirits. We take the liberty of asking him whether he had ever witnessed the performances of Herman or Heller, or any of the great professors of legerdemain, who repudiate all connection with occult science. He never had, but he has no doubt that they work their wonders by Spiritualism, and deny it in order to enhance their dexterity.

With discussions such as these half an hour passes, while some arrangements are going on in an adjoining room. A few more people come dropping in, but the party does not exceed sixteen at any time of the evening. Presently a thin, sallow man comes in, and, going round to each person, like the conductor in a horse-car, collects the entrance fee, which is no less than a dollar a head. This done, a sliding door is thrown open, and the spectators are ushered into the next room, where chairs have been placed for them in rows. A rope is extended across the room in front of the chairs, so as to keep a space clear for the operations of the mediums. Against the wall, at the further end of this space, there stands a tall cabinet, somewhat like a wardrobe with two doors, and lying about the floor are some musical instruments—a guitar, a violin, a tambourine and a drum. On looking at a printed programme of the evening's exercises, we find a promise that "there will be good instrumental music at each *séance*," the fulfillment of which is present in a young man with a fiddle, who represents the orchestra, only he sits with his face instead of his back to the audience. He is a very pale youth, with a sleepy eye, a succulent expression of mouth, and a fine, thick crop of light hair. His appearance does not indicate intellect, but he is by no means such a fool as he looks, as his interlocation with the audience, and his ready repartee will shortly show.

The thin, sallow man, who calls himself a "Doctor," and the proceeding, in general, a "see-ants," now makes a short address to the audience, requesting them to select from their number a committee of two gentlemen and one lady—the former to bind hand and foot, to seats in the cabinet, the two fraternal mediums, whose sister, also

a medium, is to have the same office performed upon her by the lady. The three mediums now appeared upon the scene, and ducking under the rope, take their place upon the floor. The two young men are dark-browed, heavy-looking fellows, of the Bowery bar-keeper stamp. The "lady medium" is not a very fascinating person. She is very untidy, not to say "dowdy," as to her toilet, and her hair, which is cut in a short crop, after a fashion common to women who have "rights," is frowsy and uncared for. To do her justice, she seems to be a little ashamed of the whole business, and awaits her turn to be tied with a very sheepish air. Two respectable-looking gentlemen from the small audience consent to act on the committee, and a well-dressed lady joins them, and the tying commences. As soon as the committee are satisfied that they have made the three mediums perfectly fast to their seats in the cabinet, and rendered them powerless to move or assist each other, the instruments of music are placed on the floor of the cabinet, the doors of which are then bolted by the "Doctor," who is the showman of the occasion, the light is turned down to a low degree of dimness, and the audience wait in breathless expectation for the "manifestations" to begin. After a minute or so, a fearful racket is heard within the mystic press. There is a horrible twanging of the guitar, accompanied by a din of drum, tambourine and cymbals. Then a "spirit-hand," holding one of these instruments, is hurriedly thrust out of a little curtained window near the top of the cabinet, and as hurriedly withdrawn. For a "spirit-hand," it seems to have a good deal of material dirt upon it, and bears a curious resemblance, so far as we can judge at a cursory glance, to some of the hands that were tied with ropes just now. The old gentleman who saw the luminous hand in his own house, is rather discontented with this manifestation, and inquires of the fiddler why the hands that appear from the window are not properly lighted up with a "hawlo." For a reply to this the fiddler refers him to the "Doctor," who states that the phenomena are apt to be intractable and various, but that "hawlos" have, ere now, been manifested through these same mediums. While the subject of hands is up, however, the fiddler volunteers some statements respecting his experiences at these "*séances*." He says that a hand has reached out and deposited a tambourine on the head of a person standing at a distance of more than six feet from the cabinet.

"Don't that argue that we take larger forms upon ourselves when we go into the other world?" asked the man who was versed in Hindoo necromancy.

"It argues that mediums are built on the principle of Pharaoh's Serpents," suggests the voice of a skeptic among the audience.

The "Doctor" and the fiddler both cast very uneasy glances at this person, who looks as if he didn't think much of the performance, in a general way. There are a few more "manifestations," all so clumsily executed, that it is surprising how some twelve or fourteen of the persons there present seem to be impressed with them, and actually "ask for more."

A large business is done by the healing mediums and clairvoyants, who have their nightly *séances* at various places in the city. Let us take a turn into one of them.

It is in a central quarter of the city. We go up a flight of steps, and enter a little boxed-off room, where a young man asks us for ten cents, having satisfied him with which magnificent sum, he tells us to walk into the hall. This is a long, low room, with close rows of chairs extending through the greater portion of its length. In the clear space at the further end of the room there is a reading-desk. A poster on the wall, containing certain rules of the place, has a business air about it, for it is signed by a "President," and contains allusions to an "Actuary." There are already about fifty persons in the room when we enter, and their number is soon increased, probably to a hundred or more. It is a very long while before symptoms of beginning the evening's exercises are displayed, and murmurs of impatience are beginning to stir among the audience. At last a man appears at the desk, so suddenly that we almost think he must have emerged from beneath it. He is a pale man, with that druggy complexion common to those who compound the pills, the potions and the bolus. Without delay he opens his address to the audience by stating that a celebrated lady medium is to address them to-night, but that she is not yet "under control," which accounts for the delay. Then, with a certain degree of fluency, though in language occasionally ungrammatical, the pale man proceeds to deliver a discourse upon the benefits of Spiritualism in general, but, more particularly, with regard to the miracles performed by it. He reads the story of Ananias and Sapphira, and says that these mendacious persons were struck down by the agency of Spiritualism. He expresses respect for the Bible, but thinks himself, or any of us, quite capable of writing an addition to it, and makes light of the prohibitory edict on that head. In the course of his remarks he alludes, in terms of glowing eulogy, to a certain physician of this city,—one who made himself very conspicuous a few years ago by professing to cure disease by imposition of hands, or imposition of some kind. To this practitioner he accords powers equal to those accorded to certain saintly personages in the days of old. He then refers to the probable arrival of Asiatic cholera among us, and this reminds him that he has a preventive for it which is warranted to cure the disease in every case, if taken in time, and which parties can obtain on application at this hall. He offers to forfeit one hundred dollars for every failure to effect a cure—that is, if the physic has been taken in time, mind. He narrates a very thrilling story about the famous doctor who professes to cure by touching, telling how he was once sent up to Blackwell's Island by his own brother—that is, to the Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island—and how he made his escape from that stronghold through the aid of Spiritualism. The spirits told him to saw through the window bars, and he did it with a knife, which seems rather bad for the vigilance of keepers at Blackwell's Island. After a very long address, interspersed with such anecdotes, the druggy man says: "The lady medium is now under control, and will address you." On this, an elderly female rises from her seat in the front row, and walks into the space near the reading-desk, with her head very much thrown back. When she faces the audience, we perceive that her eyes are closed. She raises her hands alternately to her brow, withdrawing them suddenly with a downward motion, as if

wiping off perspiration or brushing insects away. Then she gives several convulsive jerks with her mouth which do not improve her attractiveness, having done all which in a very low comedy manner, she breaks out into a long and vapid discourse, the sentiments contained in which are supposed, of course, to proceed from the spirits, of whom she is only the mouthpiece, or verbal agent. It does not strike us that there is anything new in her arguments, nor in her eloquence of a kind to entrance, on which account we think we have had quite enough for our ten cents, and we take our departure. On our way out, however, certain things occur to us in the little boxed-up room. There are several printed posters on the wall—advertisements of various patent medicines, of which it is not necessary that we should give the names. We ask the young man at the door the name of the druggist who has just addressed the meeting, and observe that it coincides with that of the patentee of the medicines. We are further informed that the druggist is the President of the hall, or institution, or whatever it may be. All this is very suggestive, and some persons might be apt to think they “smelt a rat” in the business. The young man at the door wonders that we are going away so soon, and says that several other distinguished lady mediums have yet to address the meeting—among them one to whom he rather airily and irreverently refers as “Frenchy.” And so, taking things altogether as we have described them, you can form a pretty true idea of what nightly goes on in New York City for the entertainment of people who delight in “manifestations.”

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE LAIRS OF MISERY AND CRIME.

THE question must sometimes force itself upon inquiring minds. “Where on earth do the squalid wretches, to be seen everywhere in our streets—the rag-pickers and such like—make their abodes?”

We would not recommend the inquirer to resolve himself into a committee of one, and attempt, unattended, to explore the mysteries of those reeking districts in which misery lies huddled with crime, amid the offal of such localities as the Fourth and Sixth Wards.

We determined to visit them, and so pushed up Cha'ham street, and soon disappeared in the gloomy and filthy Five Points region. Along wet and broken sidewalks; through streets whose putrescent odors were revolting; past houses, whose feeble-looking lights, in dilapidated windows, gave the whole precinct a decayed and sickly aspect; past hideous and drunken women, who saluted one with invitations that it seemed it had required a demon seven times damned to accept; past groups of little boys, a few of them tugging at the stumps of segars that they had picked up somewhere in the street; past crowds of girls, some quarreling and shouting, and others playing—yes, even there, among the heaps of vile refuse that poisoned the air and overlaid the middle of the streets—playing and laughing merrily; past knots of men, with hang-dog and most jaily looks; past corruption and pestilence in every form—as liquids, as solids,

and as human beings—amazed that such festering foulnesses should be suffered to remain so near to our marble palaces of trade. We walked as fast as the slippery stones and the obstructions that we met would suffer us to go.

We called at the station-house to see Captain Jourdan. Not in.

"Call to-morrow evening, at seven o'clock."

We did call, and we saw the Captain.

"Would the Captain allow a policeman to go round with me to the 'slums' and lodging-cellars?"

The name of a journal of which we are an occasional contributor secured us this favor.

"At what hour?"

"Eleven or twelve."

Five hours after, precisely at midnight, we entered the station-house again.

"Did the Captain leave orders for a policeman to go with me round the precinct?"

"I'm your man," said a voice in the corner. A fair-complexioned person, dressed in police uniform, jumped up from a little iron seat and came forward.

"You're late, sir," he said. "I expected you at eleven; but it's soon enough."

Taking a bull's eye, we left on our tour of exploration.

"Now, what would you like to see first?" said the roundsman, as we stepped out into the piercing wintry air.

We expressed a preference for underground lodging-houses.

"All right," said the roundsman; "I can show you enough to sicken you."

We went around to the corner of Leonard and Baxter streets, and descended about a dozen stairs to the door of a cellar. It had a window, broken and dirty. The roundsman rapped at the door with his club.

"Who's there?" cried a woman's voice.

"A policeman."

"What does the policeman want?" the voice rejoined.

"Oh, let me in and you'll see," said the roundsman.

A drunken male voice told the woman to open. There was the sound of striking a light.

"Never mind a light," said the roundsman; "open—I've got one!"

The door opened. A boy of nine or ten, entirely naked, stood before us. An unshaven, hard-featured, elderly Irish laborer sat bolt upright in bed—naked, too. A woman lay by his side.

This cellar, like all the rest, was less than eight feet high, and its floor was in bad order and extremely filthy. It had once been a noted underground hotel, kept by a negro, who has since gone up to the Island or to Sing Sing. It had an inner room, which once communicated with rooms still farther along, which again were connected with a dark and foul alley. We thought then that the atmosphere was deadly poisonous, but we remember it now as the best-ventilated of these cellars that we visited. For it was a private residence, not a lodging-house, now!

We regain the street, and a few steps brings us to another den.

Entering the hall-way through a doorless entrance, we grope our way, aided by the dim light of the lantern, the floor creaking beneath our feet as though it were about to open and swallow us. At the end of this passage another doorway, partially barricaded by old barrels and bundles of rags, leads to a flight of steps, descending which we find ourselves in a low-roofed cellar, with bare stone walls. In this cavern, which is, perhaps, fifteen feet long by ten broad, there are huddled together at least twenty human beings, of both sexes and all ages. The floor seems to be all one bed—a littering down of dirty straw such as would not be considered wholesome for a pig-pen. Where a glimpse of the floor is perceptible, we can see the boards are black and rotten, and the numerous holes in them tell plainly of the ingress and egress of swarming rats.

Crouching round a miserable bit of candle are three figures, occupied apparently either in sorting rags or in dividing such scraps of plunder as might have resulted from their joint efforts during the course of the day. The light of the "dip" falls strangely on the face of the oldest of the three—a face withered and wrinkled nearly out of all semblance to humanity, and with the black shadow of something worn upon the head cutting sharply across the upper portion of it.

"Man or woman?" ask we of our guide, who keeps turning his lantern here and there upon the closely-assorted miscellany.

"Couldn't say," was the curt reply; "pretty much mixed up here."

The other two in the group around the candle were children, apparently, though it was but from relative size that one might guess at this. Their faces were pinched and haggard, and the tangled locks of their hair were mingled with shavings and flakes of cotton.

"They have been rummaging about the wharves," said our guide; "operations in cotton on a small scale."

Most of the wretched occupants of the floor seemed to be asleep, and the effluvia that arose from the hard breathing of the heterogeneous mass brought a choking sensation to the throat. Querulous reprimands passed here and there, couched in expletives "not loud but deep." Now the wailing of a child is heard, and our guide brings his lantern to bear upon the spot from which it proceeds. The light flashes upon a small negro, rocking itself to and fro like an old woman, and crooning for the cold as it sits half-naked upon the straw. "Cover up that child, some one!" says our guide, in a stern voice. A sack is thrown over it by some unseen hand, and it becomes a part of the undistinguishable mass that is groveling on the floor.

"What do they charge for a night's lodging in this den?" asked we.

"Eight cents, or sometimes ten," replied the guide; "prices vary here with rents, as elsewhere. The premises belong to a rich man—a broker, or such like."

"John Lane's rum shop"—the policemen call the places gin-mills—was next startled by our visit. It was jammed. White boys and prostitutes of both races—Celtic and Negro—black men and white men, were in the closest fraternity. There was a rush out at the back door as soon as McDonnell's blue eyes rested on the women.



"Oh," he cried, "you needn't run; I ain't a-going to touch you."

They all knew him, and seemed to have full faith in his word. In fact everybody we met knew "Charley." We mentioned the circumstance.

"Yes," said Charley, "most of them have good reason to know me. I've sent lots of them up to the Island!"

This gin-mill is one of the cheapest and most liberally-patronized gates to ruin in the city. It is also one of the best fitted. Go into it in the day time, and you would report it to be clean and respectable, if you would use the last word in relation to such a place in any circumstances. Most of the forty or fifty persons here were colored. Their lodging-houses are in an alley near by; and the roundsman said they were much cleaner than those of the same class of Irish. For nearly all these whites are Irish. "Seems like," said another officer, "as if they were a different breed from the other Irish; they're Kerry folks; hanged if you could dig a hole in them with a crowbar deep enough to get any sense into them; there's no reasoning with them; there's no way of making them keep clean or decent but brute force, sir."

Fitzgerald's gin-mill is on the corner of Baxter and White streets. Five or six brutal-looking, bloated, blackened-eyed prostitutes sat around the stove; and one, dead drunk, lay at full length on a bench near the door. Four or five young men stood near the bar and near the stove. They all knew Charley—the women. All had been "up," some more than once.

Rum-holes cluster thickly in these squalid and loathsome localities. On the opposite corner is Tom Lane's establishment. It is much larger than either of the other two. Tom is Jim's brother. This place is noted as a resort of thieves, beggars and prostitutes of the lowest class. There were upwards of thirty men and women in the den when we visited it. The men are of the most brutal and beastly type in which humanity is capable of appearing, and most of them were more or less under the influence of liquor. The prostitutes are of the worst specimens of their class, having sunk to that depth of infamy and degradation to which nearly all arrive at last, but from which the early stages of their career often seem so far removed. Diseased and filthy, their faces bloated and haggard, their eyes dull and bloodshot, they have reached that point where further debasement is impossible; their career of sin is nearly ended, and that end is death. There is no hope for them in this life, and hopelessness is written on every line of their faces. And yet there are hardly any traces of vital wretchedness; it is negative mainly; it is the utter absence of happiness rather than the presence of misery that impresses one.

These women so lost, so fallen, are called "lofters" in the police vocabulary.

"There," said the roundsman, pointing to a young woman who stood near the end of the bar; "There's the greatest shoplifter in the United States, and she's come to this."

The girl had an intelligent face, keen, black eyes, and her black hair hung down in one mass; she seemed to be delighted with the compliment.

As we were going out, one of the young rowdies made a mocking

sound at the roundsman. "Charley" whistled; a low whistle answered. A policeman emerged from the gloom of a neighboring house and came forward.

"Clear them fellows out," said the roundsman.

The tall man in blue went into the bar-room like a wolf on the fold, and there was a sudden scampering of the young rowlies. They made a simultaneous rush for the door. In their eagerness to escape, they blocked each other's way. Meanwhile the policeman laid on his club with a vigor which must have left marks on the lower region of their bodies. The women laughed.

"Now let us go over to 'Cow Bay,'" said the roundsman, "and you will see how they live 'way up Jacob's Ladder; that's the name it goes by. 'Cow Bay' used to be where the House of Industry is now, but there's one building still standing, where they keep lodgers."

Jacob's Ladder is an outside stairway, high and steep, which ends at a landing so rickety, and in every way so dilapidated, that it excites one's wonder that it should be suffered to remain standing. You land as high up as the third story would have been. There were two doors; the roundsman rapped at both of them.

"Who's there?" asked a female voice.

"Open the door, Suse," said the roundsman.

"Ah! that's 'Charley,'" returned a voice.

A little room; three women in it; a pan filled with coal cinders in the centre of the floor; one woman on her haunches, warming her hands over it. On a filthy mattress, with one filthy coverlet over her, lay a woman asleep. No bedstead; no pillow, no other mattress. The room—how filthy, how cheerless, how rickety, no pen can describe. The gas from the fire was enough to suffocate us.

Next room; a devilish-looking little German woman, half-dressed, opened the door. Two men in one bed; her husband in the other—perhaps her husband; filthy, everything. Had I written about it then and there, I would have said extremely filthy; but there was worse to come.

We go up the narrow, worn-out, winding stairs. We enter—no, the writer did not, for he would have vomited had he done so—the roundsman entered, and we looked into three of the upper chambers. In one, under the eaves almost, small and low and slanting, a negro woman had three or four boarders; she paid a dollar a week for rent. Next door there were five or six women huddled near a stove. Who is that man lying beside a woman under a heap of rags near by them?

"They are all prostitutes here," said the roundsman.

"All five?"

"All in this building?"

"And men come here?"

"Oh, yes; they have no sense of decency."

One of these women was so frightfully diseased that the foul odors of her body was distinguishable above the other fetid odors of the room and its inmates, and the fumes of the coal gas; for in all these caverns there are no fire-places.

A man had died of fever in the attic room opposite only that



morning, and his widow and her children and lodgers were still living there, as filthy and crowded together as ever.

"We have to carry corpses from these places sometimes," said the roundsman, "and they are crawling!"

"Are all these women—all of them—of bad character?"

"Every one," said the roundsman. We descended.

"Over there," observed the roundsman, as he pointed to a place near by, "over there is where the nigger killed the white man some time since. They called it S—— Alley. Would you like to go over?"

We picked our way over the half-frozen slush, and came to a stable-door, or what appeared such, for there was a heap of stable refuse near it. The roundsman rapped; by-and-by an old negro man appeared, with but one article of clothing on his body—a short, thick old man, who made his living by begging. A low, filthy room, miserably furnished, but with more in it than the rooms up Jacob's Ladder.

On the floor lay a young man and a woman, on a filthy mattress. They were man and wife, or, at least, the old man said so. They were colored.

Near by, up one flight of rickety stairs, we saw a sadder sight still. A stove—no, a large open pot only, stood in the middle of the main room. Three little rooms led out of it, and one of them had been a china-closet once. Four squalid and debauched women were squatted down near the stove. A mattress lay on the floor, close by the fire, and on it, clasped in each other's arms—not a blanket nor rug nor coverlid, but only an overcoat over them—two persons were stretched out.

"Who's that man?" asked the roundsman.

"Dunno."

"Who keeps this place?"

"Me!" said a debauched creature, clad in unwomanly rags, looking up at the officer.

"How came you here?" said the officer to the man.

"Coming home—"

"And this crow picked you up?"

"Yes."

There are men who are as low in character as these women; but they can come out of these alleys and dens and redeem themselves; but, once there, a woman can escape in one way only—in a coffin.

At the corner of Little Water street, where once a missionary lived, we went through another house; this is the abode of the better, or, more properly, the less wretched class.

"You may make comparisons," said the roundsman. "*This is on the way down!* They try to keep up a more decent appearance, but they all go down to the cellars on 'Cow Bay' at last."

"And then?"

"Oh! then they soon drink themselves to death," said the roundsman.

We paused a moment, and then the roundsman added—

"Now, then, let us go over to —— street, if you would like to see the saloons."

We do not mention the name of this street, because we do not in-

tend to advertise the underground places of bad repute that we visited. There are hundreds of the like in the city—all one in character, however different in interior appointments and in external appearances. These cellar saloons, vile brothels though they are, have no glaring signs and pictures suggestive of tolerated vice, which sadden, disgust or tempt the passer-by in Broadway. A white painted glass door, or curtained windows, indicate these underground saloons.

We entered five or six of them. The atmosphere in them is stifling—some more, some less so—and occasionally it is sickening. It was now about two o'clock in the morning. In one of these cellars there were three girls, in another four, in another five. There was a bar-room in each. Some of the bar-rooms or saloons were small, and others quite spacious. The back part of the cellar was, in every case, divided off into bedrooms, each just large enough for a chair and a little table and a double-bed.

The roundsman opened them. They were not all unoccupied. The men were exposed to shame, if they had not got past it.

The first of these places is kept by a doctor! He had been the regular physician of a number of such cellars—for they are so subject to hideous maladies that they must needs keep a doctor—and this vile curer of vile diseases had calculated the profits of human depravity, and leased this den himself.

In this doctor's den three girls were trying to amuse themselves with cards, but it was plain that it was the dreariest of efforts to make away with the loitering hours. They are chiefly brazen-faced, bloated, debauched young creatures, uncomely, unattractive and uneducated. They are mostly Irish. At another cellar there were four or five very forward, shameless women.

"What d'ye want here, Charley?" said one of them, as we entered. "Ar' ye goin' to take us up?"

"Oh, no!" said the roundsman; "I'm only showing a friend about."

"What d'ye want?" asked the girl, addressing the writer.

"You know what he wants," replied a young woman whom we stood near.

We looked at her in surprise; she was the most modest in appearance, and the only intelligent-looking woman in the room. After we had stood four or five minutes, we noticed that she was the only person among them who shrank from the coarse familiarity of the half-dozen half-drunken, and more than half-brutal fellows in the room. The rest of them were unmistakably of un-African descent—from the fatherland of the Fenians, every soul of them—but she looked like an American born.

We kindly inquired where she was born.

"I'm an American."

"How long have you been here?"

"I've been here less than a week."

"But you have lived longer than that in these places?"

"Yes, sir."

"How long? I did not come here for the purpose you supposed; speak to me candidly."

Her manner changed. She was wholly a woman again.

"Well, sir," she replied, "I was four or five weeks in a saloon a little way along here—six doors from here. Before that I had lived a long time out of these places. I was once before about three months in them."

"Why did you first go into them?"

"Drinking, sir, I suppose. That's the truth. But I shall not stay long."

"Why don't you leave at once?"

"How can I, sir? Would your wife take me into her family?"

"But there is great demand, I am told," I retorted, "for American girls in intelligence offices. Now be honest with me. Is it not true that most of the girls here, in these places, don't want to work?"

"Yes, sir," she said, "it is true. I know I ought not to speak against my companions, as I may call them—although I feel myself above the company I'm in, and women ought to be more merciful in talking about their own sex; but it is true. But there are some who would like to go out, and would go out on a fair chance. But what chance is there?"

"Do you know the Home?"

"Yes, sir; I do know all about it. But is there any fairness in expecting us to go in there three months and live on poor fare, and work for nothing? I think some prefer to take their chances to get out themselves."

"But are there no places where girls in your position can apply, so that they may be led out?"

"I don't know of one," she said. "Mr. — knows me, but he does not know that I am here; he would get me a place if I went to him, but he would ask me so many questions, I won't go. I lived next door to him, in a clergyman's family, once. I won't go to him now"—and her thin lips compressed—"but I am not afraid that I will remain here long. Most of these girls are afraid of the keepers of these saloons, and are afraid to go out without asking them; but I'm not," she added, proudly, as her eyes snapped. "I might if I lived in some other countries, but I never will be in my own."

Oh, starry flag! emblem of liberty, source of hope, inspiration of the enslaved, even in the underground caverns of moral death!

We went into two of these brothel bar-rooms that were on the first floor. A stout, bloated old woman was the keeper of one of them, and an elderly, dark-complexioned German, cheaply dressed, was the proprietor of the other. The same sort of little bedrooms were in the back part of both of them.

The old woman tried to vindicate the character of her establishment to the roundsman. It seems that a customer had accused her or her girls of stealing a diamond pin. Her righteous indignation was a psychological study. She, the vender of young women's vice, was wroth that she should be accused of theft. The man came in only, and took a drink and left, and then returned and charged her with theft. She, the innocent, a thief! It was past human, or at least feminine, endurance.

And as she was defending her integrity three young creatures came in, laughing and riotously, and bare-headed.

One of them, hardly sixteen years old, was smoking a segar.

"Where have you been, gals?" asked the roundsman.

"Down in —— restaurant, getting supper."

"Treated?" asked the roundsman.

"Yes."

The German's hell was represented as a "quiet place"—"one of the quietest in this precinct," said the roundsman.

The wretch had a polite bearing, and invited us to be seated in a little back box.

But we hastened on, sickened and sorrowful, having seen quite sufficient of the night-side of the Five Points brothels and lodging-houses.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE NEWSPAPERS.

A DAILY newspaper is only half awake while the sun shines, but when the gas is lit, and the last of the down-town merchants and clerks is in his up-town or Brooklyn home, then the newspaper establishments begin to wake up. The red-eyed and sallow-looking printers, whom we saw lounging about the corner of Spruce and Nassau during the day, have all disappeared, and have become alert workmen in the composing room. The night editor has taken his seat, and the boy has brought in the evening mail. The mail editor turns over the exchanges with a rapid and practiced hand, eye and scissors. The latter seem to rush by instinct at an available paragraph. Occasionally he jumps up with a paragraph and puts it in the night editor's desk. Neither say a word; the latter takes it, sees that it needs more mention than an ordinary bit of news, and makes an item of it in his summary, or makes a special editorial paragraph of the news contained. The messenger comes in from the Associated Press Telegraph with yellow, ill-smelling sheets of tissue-like paper, that contain Congressional news. It is rapidly examined; no compression can be done there—it is already boiled down for newspaper use. The fire reporter rushes in with not only a report of a great fire, but with a list of the losses and the amount of the insurance—very nearly correct. That is a good item; the night editor don't cut that down. In comes another who has been detailed to give a report of a lecture. The night editor reads; it is dull, very, and would make a column of print. His pencil goes mercilessly through it until it becomes a mere paragraph—as much as it deserves. Up comes the editor-in-chief, who asks to see the telegraphic news that has just gone up a little while before. Perhaps the compositors have had it long enough to give him proofs. These he looks over; something done by the Radicals, or the Conservatives, or the Democrats, according to his own politics, fires him with an idea, and he proceeds to put it on paper with lightning-like velocity, and probably in a penmanship to which a cuneiform inscription would be plain. At the head of it he writes "*Brevier leaded—Must go in.*" Whatever else stays out excepting the important news, this editorial must be inserted. Then come in various reporters with paragraphs and reports of political meetings, police

items, accidents, etc., etc., until after twelve o'clock. The dramatic critic has sent a boy from the green-room of a theatre with his judgment of, or remarks upon, a new play, (for a dramatic editor's talk is not always criticism) and he has done his share toward the author's success or failure. Generally the critics are kind enough to dramatic authors, unless they happen to be one of themselves. Dramatic critics have less *esprit du corps* than any other class of writers or workers, and the great successes of Mr. Charles Gayler in his dramas, or that of Mr. Augustine J. Daly in his version of *Leah*, have received, comparatively, very little assistance from the Press. By and by an eager, unprofessional and fatigued-looking man rushes in, asks for the editor, tells him some story of a great disaster on steamboat or railroad which he has seen, and of which he nearly became a victim. The editor wastes no time, but asks him to write out the account or tell it. This is done; the foreman above is informed that he must reserve a column or more for Frightful Accident on the ——. The copy is sent up as fast as each sheet is completed, and when the work is done the editor says simply, "It is understood, Mr. —, that this information is not to be furnished to any other office." "Certainly, sir," or "I have already given the *Tribune* the particulars." If the first answer is given, the stranger is requested to call next day about eleven, when he will receive from twenty-five to a hundred dollars, according to the sensation character of the news. In one case, the loss of the "Arctic" steamship, which must be fresh in the minds of all our elder readers, the *Herald* gave the first survivor of the disaster who reached the city of New York, and who could give a connected account of the wreck, a thousand dollars. The recipient of the sum was Mr. George Burns, then in the employ of the European Express Company. He was kept under lock and key while writing out his account, and no compositor who had worked on the MSS. was allowed to leave the building until the paper was on press. The liberal price paid for the news was a trifle, compared with the profit made by the *Herald* and the prestige it gained thereby. This is the secret of the success of the *Herald*. It has never hesitated at any price, where important news was to be had by paying for it, and if anybody has any that has value, he will always find the *Herald* a ready and liberal purchaser. Of course, all the other papers do so in a measure, but they are apt to hesitate when the sum reaches any large amount.

Sometimes they all brace themselves up for a struggle as to who shall be first. To this, occasionally, it is necessary to get hold of, and keep hold of, the means of telegraphic communication, for the rule in telegraphic offices is first come, first served; but you may have secured the telegraph, and have nothing to send. You cannot keep possession of the line by merely paying for it. This would be contrary to the provisions in the charters of the Telegraphic Companies, and against public interest. You must have something to send! and as long as you are sending despatches, no matter of what character—for the Company has no right to criticize your message—you keep possession of the line. So it was once when the Prince of Wales was on this side of the ocean, all the great dailies had representatives at Niagara, (the *Herald* had two) where he was mo-



mentarily expected. The *Herald's* correspondent, while all were waiting for the Prince, had nothing to do, and as the time when he was to appear had gone by, he began to fear that when he did get the news from his colleague, who was traveling with the Prince, and writing out his notes for instant despatch as soon as he reached the lines, he might lose the line. At the moment there was nothing going on in the telegraph office, so he stepped in and dictated a despatch.

JAS. G. BENNETT, Esq., Herald Office, N. Y.

"Prince has not come. Is expected every minute. The wire is unoccupied. What shall I do?"

It wasn't long before the answer came.

"Telegraph the Book of Genesis."

J. G. BENNETT, N. Y. Herald Office.

The correspondent was a little puzzled; he had no Bible, and while he was out getting one, a *Tribune* or *Times* man might come in and get the line. But he rummaged around in his pockets and found a page of print, which he handed into the operator with the proper heading, and then he sallied out for a Bible. He was soon back, and so kept the telegraph going until the Prince appeared, as also did his colleague with his report, which was then rapidly transmitted over the wires. When the reporters for the other papers came in, they found, much to their disgust, that the *Herald* was not only in the occupancy of the line, but likely to remain so too long for their reports to be of any avail for the next day. And so the *Herald* beat the other papers on that, and so it probably will on the next great affair, unless they become as liberal and as wide awake as Mr. Bennett or his *alter ego*, Mr. Hudson, are.

Occasionally other telegraphic despatches come in, which are not now so warily scanned as they were during the war. These despatches are enclosed in the Associated Press envelope. Observing this, and the paper a peculiar yellow, semi-transparent kind, the night editor, if unsuspecting of fraud at the time, might very easily send up a despatch written, or manifolded, on the proper paper and in the proper enclosure, without reading it. This was actually done with the bogus President's Proclamation, during the war, which was published by the more unwary of the city Press, but which couldn't pass muster with the night editors who read *all* their despatches. It was concocted by "Howard," long known as a member of the Press in this city. In his capacity as reporter, he was considered by many as the leading man on it, but not, by any means, the most scrupulous or conscientious. He would tell a sensation story if he wasn't particular about any of its other qualities. The bogus proclamation was supposed to be intended to influence the gold market for a rush, as there were many men, and of American birth, too, who were not ashamed to make a profit out of the very agony of the country, and who were even willing to prolong the suffering and intensify it, for the sake of a few dirty dollars. Not a few who hold their heads high now, and profess a warm patriotism, were buyers of gold during the years of the Rebellion.

Toward one o'clock the last form is locked up—the outside, as it is called—that on which the first, fourth, fifth and eighth pages of

the paper come ; the first side, with the bulk of the advertisements, went to press at nine o'clock, and is probably off by this time, or may be going on upon another press. The last side then is going to press. One man is left in the editorial room to take charge of any news that might come in, and one or two compositors sleep in the composing room with the same view. Toward three, news-venders from up-town—men, women and boys—employés of news agencies, railroad news-dealers and the carriers—begin to drop in for their supplies. Fast as they get them they hurry off, and by six o'clock, or a few minutes later, there begins the short hour when there is a real lull in the life of the newspaper, for at seven office boys appear, engineers and firemen turn up, folders and clerks come in, and soon all is life and activity again.

But there is another picture. The daily newspaper and the weekly story paper, the comic monthlies and the *Merryman*, gratify an honest and decent taste, and even where they only amuse, they do not degrade. There are, however, papers, justly interdicted by the law, that thrive only on filth, and by encouraging and creating a taste for it. As the police are constantly on the watch for these, they are seldom printed in the daytime. The forms are prepared at some obscure quarter of the city, where a printing office would not be suspected, and where no sign is put out to show that there is one, and are brought, after nightfall, to some third class press-room, whose master, unsuccessful in a reputable line, hopes to make both ends meet by doing dirty work at a high price. With doors carefully locked and a good look-out kept, the work is done. The sheets are bundled up and carried off, carefully covered from all prying eyes, and the forms are hurried back to the office of their proprietor as if they were bodies of the victims of a murderous crime. This is the work of the obscene newspaper.

But all is not prosperity for those concerned in this business. Every year or two come arrests and confiscations of contraband books and papers. Few of the dealers in this business become permanently prosperous ; occasionally one emerges into respectable publishing and drops his dirty traffic. But these cases are few and far between. Most of the persons once engaged in this business just hover on the edges of society, lead an unwholesome, hunted kind of life, wear a furtive look, as if they constantly expected the visit of an officer, and seldom prosper sufficiently to compensate them for pursuing their filthy calling.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### THE RIVER THIEVES.

IF crime stalks rampant through the streets of New York during the hours of dim lamplight, so also on the rivers that bound the city, and on the bay below, it works steadily among the masses of floating things that crowd the docks and channels. There are certain facilities connected with the business of thieving upon the water, that are not enjoyed by the sharks whose element is the land.

The difficulties of detection are in favor of the dock pirate, who pulls audaciously about in his boat as if in pursuit of some legitimate calling, and frequently succeeds in landing his cargo of stolen property under the very nose of the police. Certain branches of river thieving are carried on in the open day, but it is at night, of course, that the more desperate characters belonging to the craft carry on their depredations. These are the pirates who hover around vessels in the still hours, boarding them where a strict watch is not kept, and frequently using their weapons, to test the force of the principle that "dead men tell no tales."

For the protection of the water around the city there is a force called the Harbor Police, a glance at whose arrangements form a necessary part of this chapter. This force, at present, consists of twenty-six men, under the command of Captain Hartt, once himself a mariner, and whose name is renowned throughout the city in connection with many daring arrests of desperate criminals of the land gangs—for his command was formerly in the city precincts. The headquarters of the force are on board of a good-sized, side-wheel steamer which, when not on a cruise, is moored off the Battery, near the Staten Island ferry house. She has a couple of quarter-boats on deck, and a brass gun or two—the latter more for show than use. There are two or three barges belonging to the department, and the men are of the maritime type, accustomed to working boats, and versed in many useful things peculiar to the craft. Captain Hartt is a wiry man of muscular build, with grizzled hair and beard, and a certain quiet determination of character about him that must give him a great advantage when action becomes necessary. He has a strong objection to the use of fire-arms, resort to which he does not allow except in the most desperate cases. His principle is that the club, properly handled, is a sufficient weapon in the hand of the civil officer, and his own practice of the instrument is of a very peculiar and effective kind. There is a very simple handcuff used by these maritime police for securing desperate characters. It is nothing but a bit of rope about six inches long, inserted, at either end, into a button, somewhat like the handle of a gimlet. In cases of resistance, an officer can handle his man very readily by whipping a turn of this round his wrist. Several times in the course of the twenty-four hours, the steamer is got under weigh, and run slowly up the rivers as far as Fiftieth street, or further. Close observations are made of everything going on, and yet, in spite of all this, and of the constant patrolling of the water by the force in their barges and small boats, many depredations are committed that are never brought to light; for the force is far from adequate for the protection of a harbor so thronged with life and reckless characters as that of New York.

The river thieves belong, for the most part, to the lowest scum of that peculiar class of men haunting the docks and piers of great seaport towns. They are just sailor enough to handle boats with facility, and overhaul the interior arrangements of a vessel, and just ruffian enough to take a human life where that becomes necessary to secure their object. Once, in a police court, we saw a river thief, who was a good type of his class. He was a powerful, undersized fellow, with some dark blood in him—South American,

probably, by origin. His left hand was but a stump, all the fingers of it having been removed by a surgical operation, performed on him by the mate of a ship, who used a hatchet with effect just as the robber had laid his hand upon the gunwale to board. The fellow's arms were tattooed all over with obscene emblems, and his mouth had been extended on one side nearly to his ear, by a slash from some sharp weapon.

There are sundry junk-dealers throughout the city, whose dens are depots for the proceeds of river thieving. The stock, in many of these places, consists entirely of stolen property—bales of cotton, coils of rope, ships' instruments, and such other articles as a wily depredator can manage to "convey" in the course of a midnight cruise. Collusion is a leading principle upon which river thieves work. The experienced pirate of the harbor has frequently a "pal" among the hands belonging to some vessel. This operator secretes such articles as he can from the cargo of a ship about to sail, and manages to drop them quietly to some hovering boat when all is dark and still.

Among the smaller craft in the rivers, such as schooners, the river thieves find a wide range for their operations. On such vessels as these, strange though it may appear, but very slack watch is kept at night. If a cargo has lately been disposed of, the river thieves are aware of it. The chances are that the captain of the schooner has the money in his cabin—for these coasting mariners are as careless of their pelf as are their brothers, who heave the deep sea lead. The chances are that he has had his spree ashore, and that he comes on board drunk, at a late hour of the night. Once the captain is asleep, there is but little chance of the watch keeping awake. Then is the opportunity of the river thief. Silently, in the dark, he pulls, with a couple of his "pals," to the schooner, which is anchored, probably, in some quiet creek of the river. Having divested himself of his boots, he creeps, cat-like, to the deck, where he lies awhile behind some convenient pile of ropes or sails, until he ascertains that all is quiet. Then he proceeds to lay hands on such "marine stores" as may happen to be lying around loose, which he drops over the side to his accomplices. But his object is to get at the captain's money, and to do this requires the skill of a practiced burglar. If there happen to be obstacles, such as locked doors, he removes them softly with a "jimmy," or short iron bar. He hears the snoring of the captain, in whose cabin there is a dim light burning, and, entering into the narrow chamber, he proceeds to search the trunk or locker in which he thinks it likely the money may be stowed away. Should any untoward noise, such as the falling of the lid of a trunk, awaken the sleeper, that unfortunate person's doom is sealed, for the river thief hits him a powerful blow on the temple with the "jimmy," or with a sand-club, and there is a vacancy in the number of the mess of that schooner. Then a quick retreat must be made, but the thief usually manages first to find the money, which, as often as otherwise, is in the captain's trousers pocket, stowed away under the now blood-stained pillow. Sometimes the mate or one of the hands awakes in the nick of time, but arms are seldom at hand, and the pistol of the robber is always ready to aid his retreat. In a late case of murder on board a vessel

lying in the East River, the captain of a schooner testified that, as he lay awake in his stateroom one night, about the time of that murder, his door was opened by a strange man, who ran away upon seeing him awake, and succeeded in making his escape by sliding down a chain into a boat manned by a couple of his "pals," who pulled away with him into the dark. This schooner-master deposed to having had \$1,900 in his trunk at the time, and \$200 in his trousers pocket. There were two muskets on board, he said, but they were not loaded. Sometimes the river thief does not come off so well, instances having occurred in which he has been shot dead, or badly maimed, while boarding some vessel. There is many a tragedy enacted on the river that never comes under the notice of the police. The mate of a vessel that traded to a South American port relates how, as his ship lay at anchor in the stream one night, ready to sail at the morning's dawn, he, alone on the deck, and unarmed, found himself confronted by a powerful ruffian, who had just slid over the bulwarks on to the deck. The intruder aimed a blow at him with a heavy iron hammer, but missed him, and they were instantly in gripe and rolling upon the deck. The noise awoke some of the crew, one of whom struck the robber a powerful blow on the head with a belaying-pin. The fight was over then, for the robber was dead; but there was a musket loaded with buckshot at hand, and this the mate discharged at a boat that just then pulled away from the stern of the ship, with what effect was never known by him. It was about time for the ship to sail, and too late, therefore to notify the police of the circumstance, so they made short work of it by heaving the body of the dead river thief overboard. Many a body thus disposed of drifts up about Bay Ridge or Coney Island, and all that a coroner's jury can do is to leave the mystery a mystery still.

We do not know that highway robberies on the river are of common occurrence, but we are aware of one, at least, which did not come under the notice of the police. Certain inmates of a fashionable boarding-house in the upper quarter of the city had made an afternoon of it by hiring a row-boat, in which they pulled over to the great lagerbier brewery at Guttenburg, on the Jersey side of the North River. There were festivities going on in the saloon in the upper story of the building, and the party, most of whom were ladies, remained till a late hour, enjoying themselves in the "giddy waltz." It was a still summer night as the boat, freighted with its fair cargo, and pulled by a couple of elegant young gentlemen in fancy shirts, put off from the wharf at Guttenburg. All went well for awhile. The ladies were very merry, and sang chorusses, and the gentlemen made the night fragrant with their segars. As they neared the middle of the river a boat, very silently pulled, as if with muffled oars, shot so close athwart the bow of the pleasure boat as to elicit epithets from some of the gentlemen on board the latter. In the pause that ensued for a moment, the strange boat suddenly veered round and came alongside the other. It was manned by three fearful-looking roughts, one of whom remained at the oars, while the other two, presenting revolvers at the heads of the oarsmen in the pleasure boat, ordered them to lay to, at the same time demanding an immediate surrender of all valuables on

the persons of the party. What could an unarmed party do against three river pirates armed to the teeth, and evidently ready to take life upon the first show of resistance? Three gold watches were handed over by the ladies, together with a number of rings and other small articles of jewelry. One of the gentlemen, who had a watch and chain valued at two hundred and fifty dollars, dropped it quietly overboard, under some vague impression that it might subsequently be recovered by dragging the river for it! The plunder taken from the party amounted, in all, to at least the value of six hundred dollars, and the river thieves pulled swiftly and silently away, until they were lost in the gloom of the night. There were private reasons why this affair was never reported to the police. Scandal whispered that one of the ladies of the party was somewhat "bemused" with champagne, and that the party in general preferred putting up with their losses to risking the revelations that would certainly have been made in a police court.

The grounds near Hoboken, known as the "Elysian Fields," are not unfrequently selected as a landing-place by river thieves who have "made a haul." It is a lonely place at night, and the cover afforded by the trees is favorable to the removal of small plunder. The writer of this chapter remembers the circumstance of a telescope and ship's compass being found upon the beach, not far from Castle Point, both of which articles had marks of blood upon them. A wounded man had evidently been carried through the wood there, from the traces left, but, on arriving at the road, the clue was lost, and the mystery has never been solved. It was a river thief affair, no doubt—a robbery and a row, and a ruffian shot by some captain or mate, and then a night scene in those "Elysian Fields" that must have been awful in its contrast with the sentiment belonging to that mythological name.

A foggy night on the water is a favorable time for the operations of the river thieves. These fellows are so well acquainted with all the nooks and docks and landing-places along the rivers, that they can find them, so to speak, by groping for them in the dark. Many of them have labored, at one time or another, at the occupation of towing, and this they find of great service to them in their nocturnal forays. There are points along the Hudson River Railroad where booty has often been stowed away until an opportunity arrived for its safe removal. The neighborhood of Stryker's Bay, for instance, with its broken, bush-covered ravines and sedgy ponds, offers many facilities to the river thief for the concealment of his booty. In the sea-wall of the railroad, property of various kinds has frequently been found by the early fisherman, as he paddled his boat along under its lee. In a fog, it is easy for the thieves to escape the notice of the river police, whose limited number renders the force a very inadequate one for the thorough protection of floating property. Three or four of these river thieves can pull, unobserved, in their boat, along the sea-wall referred to, on a thick night, until they arrive at some lonely point, where a landing is easily effected. In these cases they generally have confederates waiting for them at a spot previously agreed upon. The surveillance of the land police in this district is very inefficient, and goods thus landed by the thieves can be readily transferred to a market cart, and

driven quietly into town by the Bloomingdale Road, and so to the den of the omnivorous junk-dealer.

Along the East River, the numerous marshy inlets, such as Newtown Creek and Flushing Creek, are frequently resorted to, in emergencies, by river thieves, who can make a *cache* for their plunder in some nook of the marsh, until they find a safe opportunity for its removal. A sportsman, who was watching one night for wild ducks, by the faint moonlight, in one of these bays, was approached by a boat containing two men, who did not at first perceive him, concealed, as he was, by the tall sedges. He watched them quietly, as they went to work close to him, and perceived that they were about stowing away some articles in a musk-rat house, than which there could have been no better *cache* for their purpose, had they not been watched. Unluckily, some movement made by the gunner, in his skiff, attracted their attention, and at once a couple of revolvers were "trained" upon him, at a distance of not more than twenty paces. His double-barreled gun, however, brought matters nearly to a level, and the river thieves, having quickly sacked their plunder, pulled away in their boat, with muttered imprecations. On examining the spot where they were about to conceal their booty, the duck-hunter discovered that they had left after them a knife of large and dangerous proportions, which he has retained as a relic to the present day.

Doubtless more murders are perpetrated by the river thieves than ever are brought to light. Nothing can be easier than for desperadoes, provided with boats, to land in the night at some point favorable for a highway robbery, and, having beaten and plundered some marked victim, to dispose of him by taking him out upon the river and dropping him in mid-stream. There is a lonely spot of road by the Sunswick, near Astoria, where an outrage of this kind once took place. Late at night a tradesman, having a considerable sum of money about him, crossed over from the city by the Greenpoint Ferry, and wended his way on foot for his home, somewhere in the neighborhood of Astoria. He had nearly reached the Sunswick bridge—a very lonely spot at night—when he was prostrated by a blow from behind, and fell bleeding and unconscious to the ground. When he recovered his senses, he found himself in a boat with two men, who were pulling out into the stream. One of them, he was certain, was a man who had crossed over with him on the Greenpoint boat. He at once conjectured that they were about to throw him overboard, and, being a powerful swimmer, thought that his best chance of escape would be to lie still, and simulate an appearance of unconsciousness. They had not got far out into the stream when they lay on their oars for a moment, and, after a whispered consultation and some close scrutiny of their victim, heaved him silently over into the rushing water. He arose not far from the boat, but, luckily for him, the night was dark, else a bullet from a revolver might have closed the transaction. By swimming and floating with the current, he managed to scramble ashore somewhere near Hunter's Point, where he lay for some time on the beach in a state of utter exhaustion. His money, of course, was gone, and, fortunately for him, the thieves had also removed a new, heavy overcoat worn by him, together with his boots—encumbrances with which,

it is hardly probable, that he could have succeeded in gaining the shore. This little episode in river piracy will show how diversified are the operations of the dangerous class under notice, and how much easier it is for a murder to be perpetrated on the rivers than for the crime to be traced to its source.

Coasting by Jones' Wood, and so down by Hell Gate to the Harlem River, it will be obvious to the keen observer that here the river thieves must have many a haunt. It was from some of these, probably, that the murderers issued on that cold night in December, when the mate of a vessel, at anchor off Riker's Island, was foully slaughtered in cold blood. During the course of the inquest upon that crime, the stuff of which the river thief is composed came prominently to the record. One of the witnesses had been employed much in towing upon the rivers. He had also been employed in hoisting cargoes, and in other occupations alongshore. Once he had been up on suspicion of burglary, and sundry times for theft and crimes of varied character. He had been educated in the school for river thieves; in fact, to properly supervise the pupils of which academy, would require a force very much more numerous and more fully equipped than that of the present harbor police.

There is one outlet for the river thief through which he often escapes the consequences of a crime. He is frequently, as has been stated, a seaman of more or less experience; he has his accomplices among the crews in the harbor, and when advised of pursuit, he frequently evades it by hiring himself out as a hand on board some ship about to sail for a foreign port. The river thief of New York has had his experiences varied, occasionally, by little operations in the waters of the Mersey, at Liverpool. His hands have been imbrued in blood amid the pig-tailed population who crowd the port of Hong Kong. He learns from slimy Lascars many a lesson in the use of the knife, teaching them in return, no doubt, things in the way of dark work that they were not up to before. His end is generally a violent one, of course, but he is much oftener killed in the act of perpetrating some crime, than brought to justice in a more legitimate way.

The low boarding-houses in Mackerelville, Cherry street and Water street, are the principal shore haunts of the river thieves on the east side. There are many such slums near the North River, where they have their dens. In that scattered village of shanties running from river to river on the south latitude of Central Park, many of these fellows also find their shelter, and from this it is difficult to rout them. There is a junk trade carried on among these shanty people, who are mostly desperadoes of the worst class. At night the river thief, when not upon his "lay," takes his amusement in the low dance-houses and grogeries with which the port slums are crowded. Many of the characters introduced in the chapter descriptive of the dance-houses belong to the river thief class. With the keepers of such "cribs" the river thieves are on business terms, for the former are very generally "fences," or receivers of stolen goods, to whom the harbor pirate consigns his ill-gotten plunder. The dance-house keeper himself, has frequently followed business as a river thief, and is usually quite ready to recur to that



occupation should his shore transactions grow dull. Detectives will point out to you, in these reeking places, fellows who are known to be river thieves, many of whom are probably murderers besides. They have not, in general, a seamanlike air about them, but are, for the most part, the very type of the worst kind of humanity that haunts great seaport towns, and that is saying a good deal.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

## AN ARION BALL.

IN the days of old, there was a celebrated harper in the Island of Lesbos, and his name was Arion. His fame reached the court of Periander, at Corinth, to which that magnate persuaded him to emigrate with his harp. Well, he lived there for some time, Arion did, until he learned, from some newspaper of the day, probably, that there was a good opening for a young man in his line in Italy, and to Italy he went, accordingly, on speculation. He drew uncommonly good houses in that land of lute and song, and soon became so rich, in fact, that he bethought him of returning to Corinth, there to dwell in ease and luxury, and to astonish the mind of the great Periander with his display of the greenbacks of the period. With this view he chartered a vessel, manned by Corinthian mariners, and when the wind and tide were all right, up anchor was the word, and away they sailed from the port of Tarentum. But the tars of Corinth turned out to be a scaly lot. They coveted the greenbacks of Arion, and, to come at them, they concocted a plot to throw that hapless minstrel into the sea. Arion offered to compromise matters by forking over all his greenbacks to them if they would only let him be, but the Corinthian scoundrels laughed at the idea of his giving them that which they were in a position to take, and they insisted that he should commit suicide either by *hari kari* in his stateroom, or by plunging into the briny deep. Seeing how things lay, Arion made one last request, which was that he might be permitted to execute a fantasia upon his favorite instrument, previous to committing himself to the locker of the immortal David Jones. This was granted, for the Corinthian mariners were men of taste, who liked to commit their murders to the strains of soft music. Putting on his richest clothes, then, Arion advanced to the poop, where, striking an attitude and a chord upon his harp, he sent the wild melody of his death-song vibrating over the surface of the blue waters. Attracted by the strain, dolphins came playing about the ship; and now, the melody played out, Arion threw himself, harp in hand, into the sea, where one of the dolphins, observing that he could not swim, took him upon its back, wagged its scaly tail, and steered straight with him for Tœnarum, where he landed. From this he walked to Corinth, not having the means of riding in the omnibus. He was very wet when he got there, and yet, in spite of this circumstance, Periander declined to believe his narrative about the dolphin, calling it a "fish story," and he actually put Arion in a house of detention for witnesses, pending the arrival of the Corin-

thian ship. When that event came round, Periander asked the captain and crew what news from Italy, and especially about Arion. He was assured by them that the harper was in excellent health and spirits at the date of their sailing, and that his concerts continued to be numerously attended by the fashionable people of Tarentum. They were a good deal sold, however, when Arion was introduced to them, habited in his fancy costume, and with his harp-case under his arm. To cut matters short, they all pleaded guilty of the attempt to murder, and were gibbeted accordingly, by order of Periander.

The foregoing brief account of Arion is necessary to the full understanding of the scope and aim of the Arion Society. It is an association of German residents of New York, instituted so long ago as 1854, and was called by the name of Arion, as being a society of a musical and dressy character. The Arion is a flourishing institution. From a small seedling, it has blossomed out into a great and gorgeous century flower, and one of the events of each succeeding February, of late, has been the Arion Masquerade Ball.

This curious frolic is usually held at the Academy of Music, that being the place best adapted for the great throng of revellers attending it, as well as for the varied performances got up for the occasion. In February, 1865, there were said to be seven thousand people present at the Arion Ball, three thousand of whom were in masquerade costume, and the sale of tickets amounted to \$10,000. How much the custom has taken hold may be inferred from the fact that tickets to the amount of \$22,500 were taken up when the occasion came round in February of the present year.

If the weather happens to be fine, the scene outside the Academy of Music, on an Arion Ball night, is a very lively one. Thousands of outsiders crowd thither to enjoy glimpses of the wonderful and awful personages that are driven up in carriages and shot out upon the steps of the theatre. These are hailed with shouts of laughter, and with critical remarks more sharp than flattering, as they enter the massive portals. There is a strong force of police present—an arrangement very necessary to keep the depredating class in order. Pickpockets make a harvest here, of course, and quite as bad as the other pickpockets are the vociferous speculators in tickets, who try to force their "paper" on the unwary. These fellows will sometimes get as much as fifty dollars for a ticket, early in the evening. The ticket may be a genuine one, or it may not. In the latter case, the purchaser of it is undeceived at once by the astute door-keepers. Wrathful he returns to inflict summary vengeance upon the swindler by whom he has been victimized, but that person, it is needless to say, has *vamosed* for districts unknown. We have heard of but one instance in which stern justice overtook one of these ticket operators on the spot. He was arrested on the verge of the crowd by the person on whom he had just played his game—a large and muscular gentleman from Vermont—who first punched his head against a lamp-post, and then deposited him in an ash-barrel, heels uppermost.

As the Arion Ball is essentially a carnival *fest*, its arrangements are all of an extremely grotesque character. The Germans have their own ideas on the subject of the grotesque, the greatest allow-

able breadth being necessary to their idea of fun. The artists who decorate the surroundings for an Arion Ball must, one would suppose, have been put through a previous course of strong German liquors, so as to bring them to the pitch of *delirium tremens* proper for their task. The "banner with a strange device" startles quiet people at every turn. There may be humor in these hideous conceptions, but if so, it is of a kind appreciable only by the massive Teutonic mind. Equally exaggerated in conceit are the other decorations. From the pillars that support the boxes bird-cages are suspended. Are these the toy-like fabrics in which our ladies so delight, and do they imprison little loves of canaries, or linnets, or finches that whistle waltzes with *piccolo* effect? Not by any means. The cages are nothing but "skeleton skirts" of large dimensions, with floors affixed to them, and the sweet song-bird that occupies each is a barn-door chanticleer in full plumage—a real fowl-and-blood representative of the "early village cock." Comic statues grin here and there from their pedestals, suggesting the idea that the shipping in the port had been invited to the feast, and had sent up their figure-heads to represent them on the occasion. Germany is typified by a colossal picture of a princely personage, who holds in his red right hand a huge goblet of foaming *lager bier*, while, to represent America, there is a wonderful work of high art hung opposite to this—a picture of the everlasting and irrepressible "darky"—cause to our country of so much merriment and so much woe. Upon the stage many "infernal machines" are conspicuous, exciting the wonder of the strange guest as to what horrible rites are to be performed in the course of the evening. The word "Arion," blazing in a thousand brilliant gas-jets, dazzles the eyes of the spectator who has not provided himself with a bit of smoked glass. Curious effects of colored fire are displayed from time to time. In the proscenium boxes there is a goodly company of stuffed figures, the leading one of which represents Prince Carnival, patron of the quaint sports of the season. There are great bouquets affixed to many salient points of pillar and cornice. The markets have been ransacked to procure materials for these—cabbages, carrots, beets and onions—all suggesting the wherewithal for a tank of vegetable soup when the feast is done. Year after year these decorations and accessories are varied in design, and year after year they seem to become more ridiculous and more grotesque.

Among the queer trades that flourish, more or less, in a great city like New York, that of the "nose maker" is one by which the country cousin has, ere now, been much troubled and perplexed. The solution of that mystery is to be found at an Arion Ball. Hardly any person is rash enough to display his natural and inherited proboscis at an Arion Ball. With carnival time the time of the nose maker has come, and he makes the most of it, and of his noses, while the game is on. Usually the nose of the reveller at an Arion Ball is preposterous as to its dimensions and color, and it frequently has a pair of goggles affixed to it, and an impossible moustache. The artist in noses must needs be a man of great inventive power, and having a keen eye for color. Nature can be of no use to him for his studies, but opium may, because it is only to the influence of

some such drug that one can trace the hideous nasal appendages to be seen at an Arion Ball.

By nine o'clock the floor and tiers of the Academy are generally full, and then the wild revelry of the carnival sets in. The floor-committee is a very important element of the arrangements here. It is composed of Teutonic gentlemen, selected for their stature and fine personal appearance. Sometimes they are habited in the costume of knights of the middle ages, and their deportment is imposing in the extreme. In the course of the evening there is a grand carnival procession, in which Prince Carnival is borne on a throne, in the midst of a crowd of representatives of ancient and modern celebrities to the music of several brass bands. Here are to be seen Mars and Bellona, in appropriate proximity to the leading generals who figured in the late war. Gold brokers and bounty brokers are in the procession, too, with the appropriate emblems of their extremely crafty crafts. There are soldiers and sailors, and an indescribably ridiculous character carrying a keg of lager beer. The President of the United States is borne along upon a platform, where he superintends the work of a number of tailors engaged in the delicate task of "reconstructing" certain States. Rabid-looking Irishmen figure also in the throng. They are of the newly-caught kind, revelling in all the glory of their native *caubeens* and corduroys, and they represent the Fenian interests with wonderful fidelity and adherence to facts. Their "Sunburst" is ready to cast its long shadow over their native mountains, and their proud spirits are not going to be crushed beneath the iron-shod heel of their natural enemy. They will have no bonds except those of the Fenian treasury. There are Queens of Flowers in the procession—pretty ladies dressed to represent the flowers after which they are named for the night. There are several glee clubs, whose province is, perhaps, to contribute to the general glee. There is a comic band—nay, tragic—which appropriately hails from the Jersey Flats, and this may account for the flatness by which its music is characterized. Large exotics are borne along in the procession, adding much to its general effect.

And now, while the revel is at its highest, and the heterogeneous elements of which it is composed are moving to and fro in a bewildering maze, a sort of panic seizes upon the assemblage. There is a panic in the music. The dancers seem frozen to the floor, and all eyes are turned toward the upper tier of boxes, in which a row has taken place among the masqueraders who are loitering there. It seems to be a very serious business, and some of the lady maskers are preparing themselves for a graceful and effective swoon. Ere the police can interpose, a terrible transaction takes place. The wranglers in the gallery have seized upon a man, and are trying to throw him over. He is poised for a moment upon the front of the boxes, and appears to be in a collapsed state. Ha! he totters; a wretch strikes him a powerful blow from behind, and O, horror! he comes falling from the dizzy height, his head striking heavily against the edge of the second tier, whence he rebounds with force, and falls to the floor, just as he has reached which he is neatly caught up by a cord affixed to his pantaloons, so that he arrives among the horrified spectators in a perpendicular state. He looks ex-

hausted, of course, and very limp—which latter may be accounted for by the fact that he is made up of a fancy dress, stuffed. But a pretty German milliner, in the dress of a *contadina*, has really fainted, and there is a crowd of sympathizing Teutons around her, all intent upon supplying her with lager bier.

The excitement caused by this “delicate stratagem” has hardly subsided, when a number of *grosses-têtes* make their appearance on the floor. They are got up with enormous “property” heads furnished with movable glass eyes, which wink, and leer, and glower, after a very ludicrous fashion. These characters, fifty in number, make tremendous havoc in the crowd, as they move around the floor singing an unearthly chorus. After this, the attention of the spectators is directed to a rope stretched from one proscenium box to another at the opposite side of the house. An immense German Falstaff makes his appearance in the proscenium box at one end of the rope, and apologizes for the non-appearance of a celebrated rope-walker, whom illness has prevented from entertaining the guests to-night. Falstaff states, however, that he, himself, has resolved to supply the place of the famous walker of the tight-rope. At this, a buzz of incredulity pervades the throng, but Falstaff says, “You shall see,” or some words to that effect, in German, and retires for a moment, to have his feet chalked, probably, for the attempt. Presently Falstaff makes his appearance upon the rope, along which he staggers in a way that would be ludicrous, were it not shocking, for the spectators expect every moment to see him precipitated to the floor. But no; he safely gains the further box, though not until after several hair-breadth escapes. The crowd breathe more freely, and so does Falstaff, perhaps, but he has not finished his performance yet. Once more he plants his foot upon the rope, along which he again totters, and staggers, and bungles, until he has reached the point from which he started. Then he turns and bows to the crowd, *some* of whom know exactly what he is made of, and who made him, and how there were two Falstaffs in the field that night—one who made the little speech, and the other who bungled through the Blondin feat with the help of ropes, like any other puppet.

Quadrilles performed by characters taken from zoology, are a feature of the Arion Ball. Eight personages, made up to represent gigantic frogs, come hopping into the middle of the circle, where they perform a dance that really may come under the designation of a “hop.” A matter-of-fact person present, not a German, inquires with simplicity whether those are the hops that are put into lager bier. For a reply to this he is referred to a Knight of Malta, who stalks majestically around the circle. The frogs are very successful, and, the quadrille over, they go hopping away, amid a murmur of applause, to have their lager bier.

Here an immense demijohn, labelled “*Kirschenwasser*,” whirls by in a waltz with a lady whose dress is made up entirely of newspapers—editorial articles converted into articles of costume. A Peruvian *cacique* goes by, solemnly, with a large cage on his back, filled with tropical birds of gay plumage; and, by way of a *pendant* to him, here comes a jolly market woman, carrying on her shoulders a basket filled with an assorted cargo of vegetables and fruit.

Presently there is another kind of greenback quadrille, which rivals even that of the performing frogs. Sixteen Arions make their appearance on the floor, in a costume intended to represent the present currency of the country, from the one dollar denomination upwards. They go through the figures of the dance as creditably as mere paper money could be expected to do. Money is always popular, and these bipedal greenbacks come in for their share of applause.

In the course of the night a balloon ascent is announced. At one Arion Ball, the balloon of the occasion was stuffed with Confederate notes. It was let up from the floor about midnight, and, as it neared the dome, it burst amid a brilliant display of fireworks, and all the poor paper went circulating wildly through the upper spaces.

Back of the stage there is a structure of some kind, on the roof of which various rare performances take place, by means of automations. The latter are worked by ropes and cords attached to the gallery, and the scenery against which they are relieved is of that kind so dear to the massive German mind, representing clouds with angels seated on them, each of said angels being a portrait of some well-known member of the Arion Society. The Turners are very conspicuous in the course of the evening's entertainments. Physical culture is a great point with the Germans, and many and great are the acrobatic accomplishments of the *Turnverein*. Here, at an Arion Ball, they figure to great advantage. They throw summersaults with an agility that amateurs but seldom display. They string themselves together like German sausages, and pile themselves up, one over another, like *pr.tzels* on a plate. Their muscles work like steel springs under an elastic tissue, and ladies' eyes are beaming on their manly forms through many a velvet mask. Who wouldn't like to be a member of the *Turnverein*, to turn hand-springs when nothing else is to be turned to advantage, and scale the battlements of Cupid by making one of a pyramid of acrobats thirty feet high!

And now, when the athletic sports of the night begin to flag a little, and the dance is again in full swing, there comes a whirl of reckless characters into the thick of the tumult, making a track, after the manner of a western tornado, through the living forest of maskers. This is the association called the "Wicked Club." Its members are bound by an oath to do all the mischief they can on this particular occasion, short of taking life or property, or maiming the human form divine. Dressed in sundry absurd costumes, these pestilent personages weave themselves in and out everywhere through the crowd. They pull off those noses that afford them a convenient grasp, and where that artificial member represents a snub, they flatten it closer to the face of the wearer than the artist in noses ever intended it to go. Pierrots have their sugar-loaf hats bonnetted down over their green goggles. The Chinese mandarin, with the queue, finds himself suddenly deprived of that appendage, with which a member of the Wicked Club is walloping a burnt-cork African with an energy worthy of an overseer from Tennessee. Feathers are snatched from the scalp-locks of majestic Indian Chiefs, and stuck jauntily into the waterfalls of the Empress of the

French and the Queen of Night. A quiet domino has stripes put upon his face by fingers that have stolen the paint from the face of a warrior of the Comanches. A severe puritan is "translated" by having one of the big heads, already referred to, crowded down over his own, which more than one person present says is a "very good way to serve the severe puritan; what business had he there?" Here is a monk, with a clown's hat driven down so tightly over his shaven crown as to baffle all his efforts to get it off. Diogenes, with his lantern, is eagerly scanning the members of the Wicked Club, to see whether he can find an honest man among them, but his hopeless task is cut short by a couple of members of that association, who wrap him from head to foot in the blanket of an Indian warrior, extinguishing him and his lantern alike. A grave Turk has had one of the hideous caricatures smashed down upon his head, which appears through it like that of a stage Hassan emerging from a trap. All this time the brass instruments are in full blast, blurring forth polkas, and redows, and waltzes, and gallops, with an energy characteristic, exceedingly, of the horns of a German brass band. At last the Wicked Club, having expended some of its wickedness and most of its wind, vanishes away to the unknown region whence it came, and nobody seems in the least to regret its departure. The dance is resumed, fresh maskers come dropping in until long after the midnight hour, and it is not far from morning's dawn when the revel is over, and the last of the revellers are retiring from the halls of the grotesque.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### A SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE OLD BOWERY.

It's a close, murky Saturday night in December. There's a drizzly rain dropping from the leaden heavens. Its drops are very fine—almost imperceptible. Yet you are not mistaken about its raining, for your over-coat is damp and heavy. Your segar is moist and draws hard, and the flags are slippery with a damp, greasy slime. The car-drivers, in the street before you, are sure it means rain, for their heads and shoulders are seen—above the steam of their jaded horses—enveloped in the big capes of those everlasting blue coats so dear to the heart of every practical horse-car driver the city over.

Why I have spoken of the rain is that I have been, for a mortal hour, puffing a vile segar—(a denizen of this quarter)—before the dingy granite pillars, which, like some mythical quartette of stone giants, guard the entrance of this notorious play house—The "Old Drury" of New York.

I came to my post very early, my dear reader, not to get a front seat as you may infer, but to mark from the first the gradual gathering of that squalid band of urchins who never fail on benefit nights to besiege the causeway leading to the pit of this old castle of fun and fierce acting.

Since I first strolled out of that beer garden next door where I had been weak enough to invest in this vile segar, I have seen a whole row of apple-stands and pea-nut stalls spring into light on the sidewalk, and there is now a gallery of withered old, toothless faces, very ghastly in the lurid light of their torches hovering over their store of pippins and nuts.

Then I have seen, too, those canvas transparencies, flapping over head, grow luminous, as if by magic, and the smell of gas about me is very strong.

Speaking of those weird paintings up there, I don't think Mr. Barnum, in the palmiest days of the Old Museum, dreamed of such a display in the Free Art Line. When the magic lantern man puts in the slide of "Noah coming out of the Ark" before removing the "Daniel in the Lion's Den" the white sheet before the audience is very much like the impression I got of those artistic daubs. There hangs "Fox-cy" with a red nose, green eyelids and yellow hands; and there hangs Fannie Herring in blue stockings and purple shoes—shoving up a yellow hill an orange colored ash-cart with the assistance of a couple of sky-blue terriers with pink eyes. But with the fog and drizzle, the bad lights and the glaring lights, these painted marvels have that mixed appearance of that magic lantern catastrophe.

I had not loitered long after the gas blazed up when from up the street, and from down the street, and from across the street there came little squads of dirty, ragged urchins—the true gamin of New York. These at once made a gymnasium of the stone steps—stood on their heads upon the pavements or climbed, like locusts, the neighboring lamp-posts; itching for mischief; poking fun furiously; they were the merriest gang of young dare devils I have seen in a long day. It was not long before they were recruited by a fresh lot of young "sardines" from some where else—then they went in for more monkey-shines until the door should be unbarred. They seemed to know each other very well, as if they were some young club of genial spirits that had been organized outside of the barriers of society for a long while. What funny habiliments they sported. It had never been my experience to see old clothes thrown upon young limbs so grotesquely. The coat that would have been a fit for a corpulent youth nearly buried a skinny form—the height of your cane.

And on the other hand, "young dropsey's" legs and arms were like links of dried "bolonas" in the garments which misfortune's raffle had drawn for him. Hats without rims—hats of fur, dreadfully plucked—with free ventilation for the scalp—caps with big tips like little porches of leather—caps without tips, or, if a tip still clung to it, it was by a single thread and dangled on the wearers cheek like the husk of a banana. The majority seemed to have a weakness for the costumes of the army and the navy. Where a domestic tailor had clipped the skirts of a long blue military coat he had spared the two buttons of the waist-band, and they rested on the bare heels like a set of veritable spurs. Shoes and boots, (and remember it's a December night,) are rather scarce—and those by which these savoyards could have sworn by grinned fearfully with sets of naked toes. One "young sport," he had seen scarcely ten such winters, rejoiced in a pair of odd-mated rubber over-shoes, about



the dimensions of snow-shoes. They saluted him as "Gums." A youngster, with a childish face and clear blue eyes, now shuffled upon the scene.

"O Lordy, here's Horace, jist see his git up." A shout of laughter went up and Horace was swallowed in the ragged mob.

"Horace" sported a big army cap like a huge blue extinguisher. He wrapped his wiry form in a cut-down, long-napped white beaver coat, the lappels of which were a foot square, and shingled his ankles as if he stood between a couple of placards. I had seen the latest caricature on the philosopher of the *Tribune*, but this second edition of H. G. swamped it. I knew that that young rogue had counted upon the effect of his white coat, and he enjoyed his christening with a gleeful face and a sparkle in his blue eyes. O, for the pencil of a Beard or a Bellew, to portray those saucy pug-noses, those dirty and begrimed faces! Faces with bars of blacking, like the shadows of small gridirons—faces with woeiful bruised peepers—faces with fun-flashing eyes—faces of striplings, yet so old and haggard—faces full of evil and deceit.

Every mother's son of them had his fists anchored in his breeches pockets, and swaggered about, nudging each other's ribs with their sharp little elbows. They were not many minutes together before a battle took place. Some one had tripped "Gums," and one of his old shoes flew into the air. I think he of the white coat was the rascal, but being dubbed a philosopher, he did his best to look very wise, but a slap on the side of the ridge of his white collar upset his dignity, and "Horace" "went in," and his boney fists rattled away on the close-shaven pate of "Gums."

The doors are now unbarred, and this ragged "pent up little Utica" rends itself, but not without much more scratching and much swearing. O, the cold-blooded oaths that rang from those young lips! As the passage to the pit is by a sort of cellar door, I lost sight of the young scamps as the last one pitched down its gloomy passage.

In the human stream—in a whirlpool of fellow-beings—nudging their way to the boxes and the upper tiers, I now found myself. It was a terrible struggle—females screaming, were eddied around and around until their very faces were in a wire cage of their own "skeletons."

"Look out for pickpockets," shouted a Metropolitan. Every body then tried to button his coat over his breast, and every body gave it up as a bad job. In at last, but with the heat of that exertion—the smell of the hot gas—the fetid breath of two thousand souls, not particular, many, as to the quality of their gin—what a sweltering bath follows! The usher sees a ticket clutched before him, and a breathless individual saying wildly, "where!" He points to a distant part of the house, and the way to it is through a sea of humanity. A sort of a Dead Sea, for one can walk on it easier than he can dive through it. I shall never know how I got there at last; all I remember now are the low curses, the angry growls and a road over corns and bunions.

The prompter's bell tingles and then tingles again. The bearded Germans of the orchestra hush their music and the big field of green baize shoots to the cob-web arch.

Now is the time to scan the scene—that teeming house—that instant when all faces are turned eagerly to the foot-lights, waiting breathlessly the first sound of the actor's voice. The restlessness of that tossing sea of humanity is at a dead calm now. Every nook and cranny is occupied—none too young—none too old to be there at the rise of the curtain. The suckling infant “mewing and sucking in its mother's arms.” The youngster rubbing his sleepy eyes. The timid Miss, half frightened with the great mob and longing for the fairy world to be created. Elder boys and elder sisters. Mothers, fathers, and the wrinkled old grand-sire. Many of these men sit in their shirt-sleeves, sweating in the humid atmosphere. Women are giving suck to fat infants. Blue-shirted sailors encircle their black-eyed Susans, with brawny arms (they make no “bones” of showing their honest love in this democratic temple of Thespis). Division street milliners, black-eyed, rosy-cheeked, and flashy dressed sit close to their jealous-eyed lovers. Little Jew boys, with glossy ringlets and beady black eyes, with teeth and noses like their fat mammas and avaricious-looking papas, are yawning every where. Then there is a great crowd of roughs, prentice boys and pale, German tailors—the latter with their legs uncrossed for a relaxation. Emaciated German and Italian barbers, you know them from their dirty linen, their clean shaven cheeks and their locks redolent with bear's grease.

Through this mass, wandering from pit to gallery, go the red-shirted pea-nut venders, and almost every jaw in the vast concern is crushing nut shells. You fancy you hear it in the lulls of play like a low unbroken growl.

In the boxes sit some very handsome females—rather loudly dressed, to be sure—but beauty will beam and flash from any setting.

Lean over the balcony and behold in the depths below the famous pit, now crowded by that gang of little outlaws we parted with a short time ago.

Of old times—of a bygone age—is this institution. In no other theatre in the whole town is that choice spot yielded to the unwashed. But this is the “Bowery,” and those squally little spectators so busy scratching their close-mown polls, so vigorously pummelling each other, so unmercifully rattaned by despotic ushers—they are its best patrons.

And are they not, in their light, great critics, too? Don't they know when to laugh, when to blubber, and when to applaud! and don't they know when to *hiss*, though! What a *fiat* is their withering hiss! What poor actor dare brave it? It has gone deep, deep into many a poor player's heart and crushed him forever.

The royal road to a news boy's heart is to rant in style.

Versatile Eddy and vigorous Boniface are the lads, in our day, for the news-boy's stamps.

Ranting is out of the female line, but Bowery actresses have a substitute for it.

At the proper moment they draw themselves up in a rigid statue, they flash their big eyes, they dash about wildly their dishevelled hair, with out-stretched arms and protruding chins they then shriek out V-i-l-l-a-i-n!

O, Fannie Herring! what a tumult you have stirred up in the

roused pit! No help for it, my dear lady. See, there's "Horace," standing on his seat and swinging his big blue cap in a cloud of other caps—encore! encore! And the pretty actress bows to the pit and there is more joy in her heart from the yells of those skinny little throats than from all the flowers that ladies and gents from above may pelt her with.

The bill of fare for an evening's entertainment at the Old Bowery is as long as your cane, and the last piece takes us far into the night—yet the big house sits it out, and the little ones sleep it out and the tired actor well earns his pay.

I'll not criticise the acting—a great part of the community thinks it's beyond the pale of criticism—this peculiarity of tearing things to pieces, and tossing around "supes" promiscuously.

And another thing, those little ungodly inns down there have a great appreciation of virtue and pathos. They dash the r dirty fists into their peepers at the childish treble of a little Eva—and they cheer, O so lustily! when Chastity sets her heavy foot upon the villain's heart and points her sharp sword at his rascal throat. They are very fickle in their bestowal of approbation, and their little fires die out or swell into a hot volcano according to the vehemence of the actor. "Wake me up when Kirby dies," said a veteran little denizen of the pit to his companions, and he laid down on the bench to snooze.

"Mind yer eye, Porgie, said his companion, before Porgie had got a dozen winks. "I think ther's somthen goen to bust now." Porgie's friend had a keen scent for sensation.

As I came out at the end of the performances I again saw "Horace." He had just rescued a "butt" from a watery grave in the gutter. "Jeminy! don't chaps about town smoke 'em awful short now'days!" was the observation of the young philosopher.

The theatre is almost the only amusement that the ragged news-boy has, apart from those of the senses. The Newsboys' Lodging House, which has been the agent of so much good among this neglected class of our population, find the late hours of the theatre a serious obstacle to their usefulness. It is safe to say that if the managers of the two Bowery Theatres would close at an earlier hour, say eleven o'clock, they would prosper as greatly as at present, and the boys who patronize their establishments would be much better off in body and mind. An effort is about to be made to obtain this reform from the managers voluntarily—instead of seeking legislative aid. We are quite sure it will be for the interest of all to close the theatres early.

THE END.

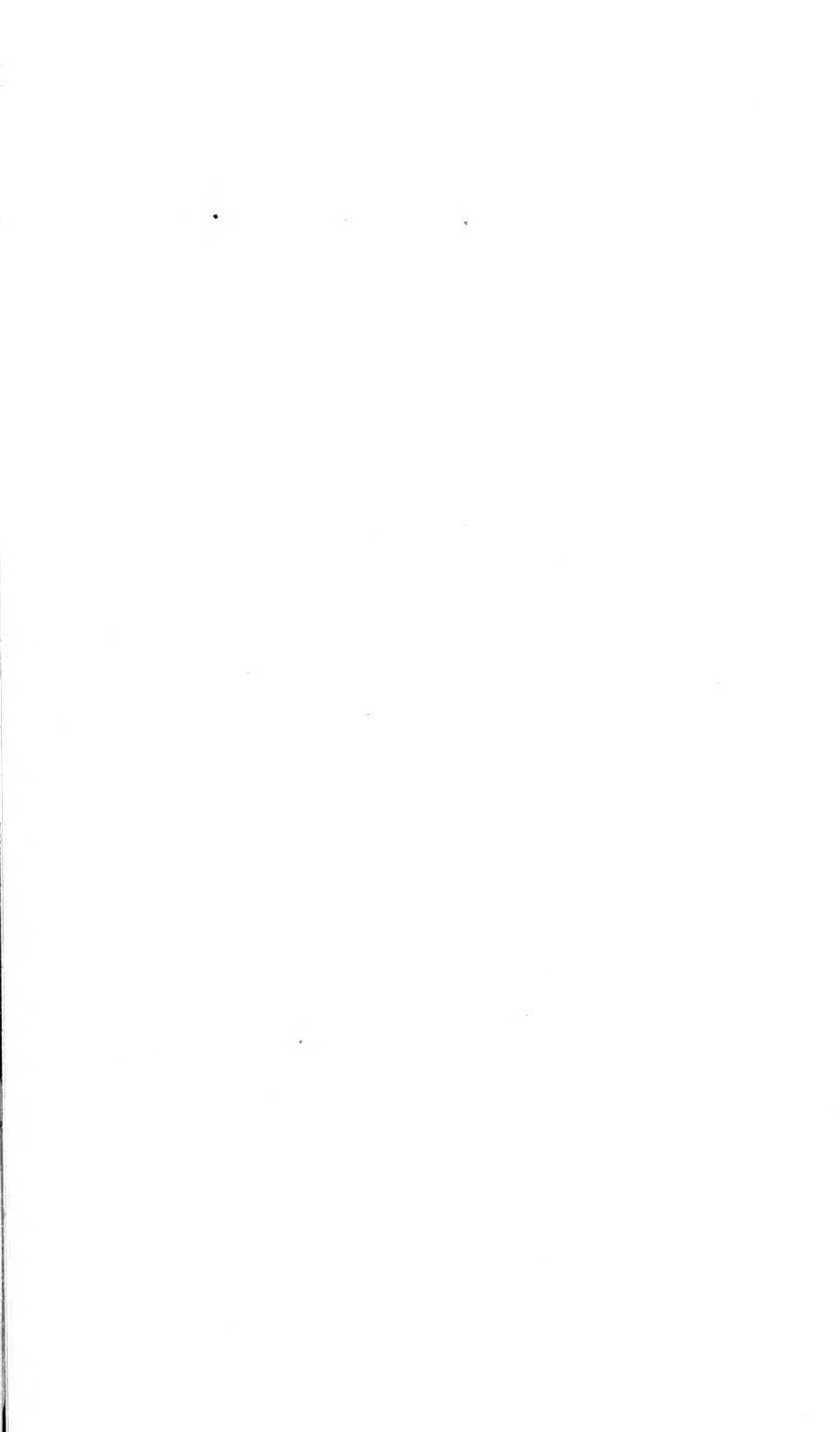
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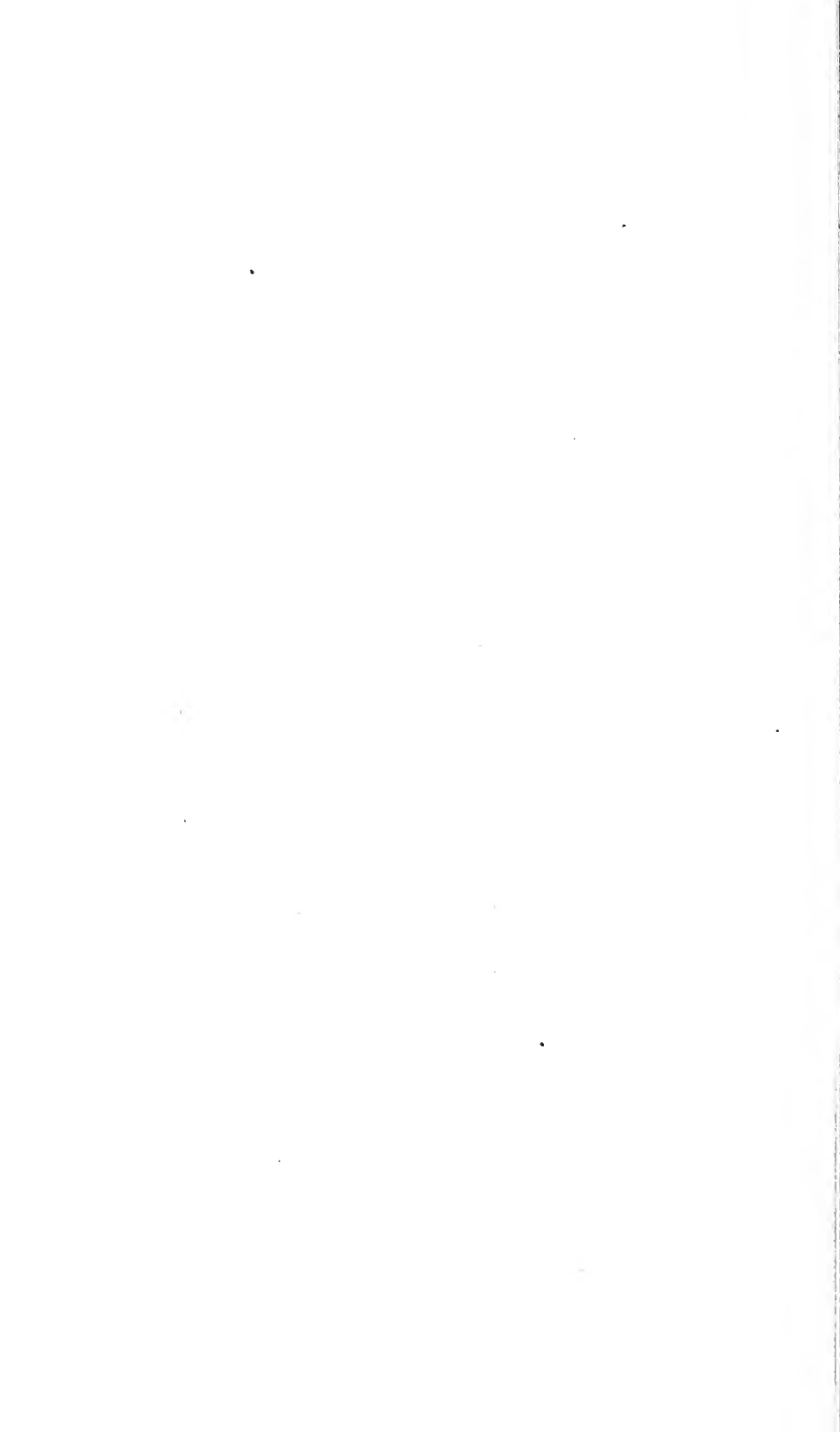
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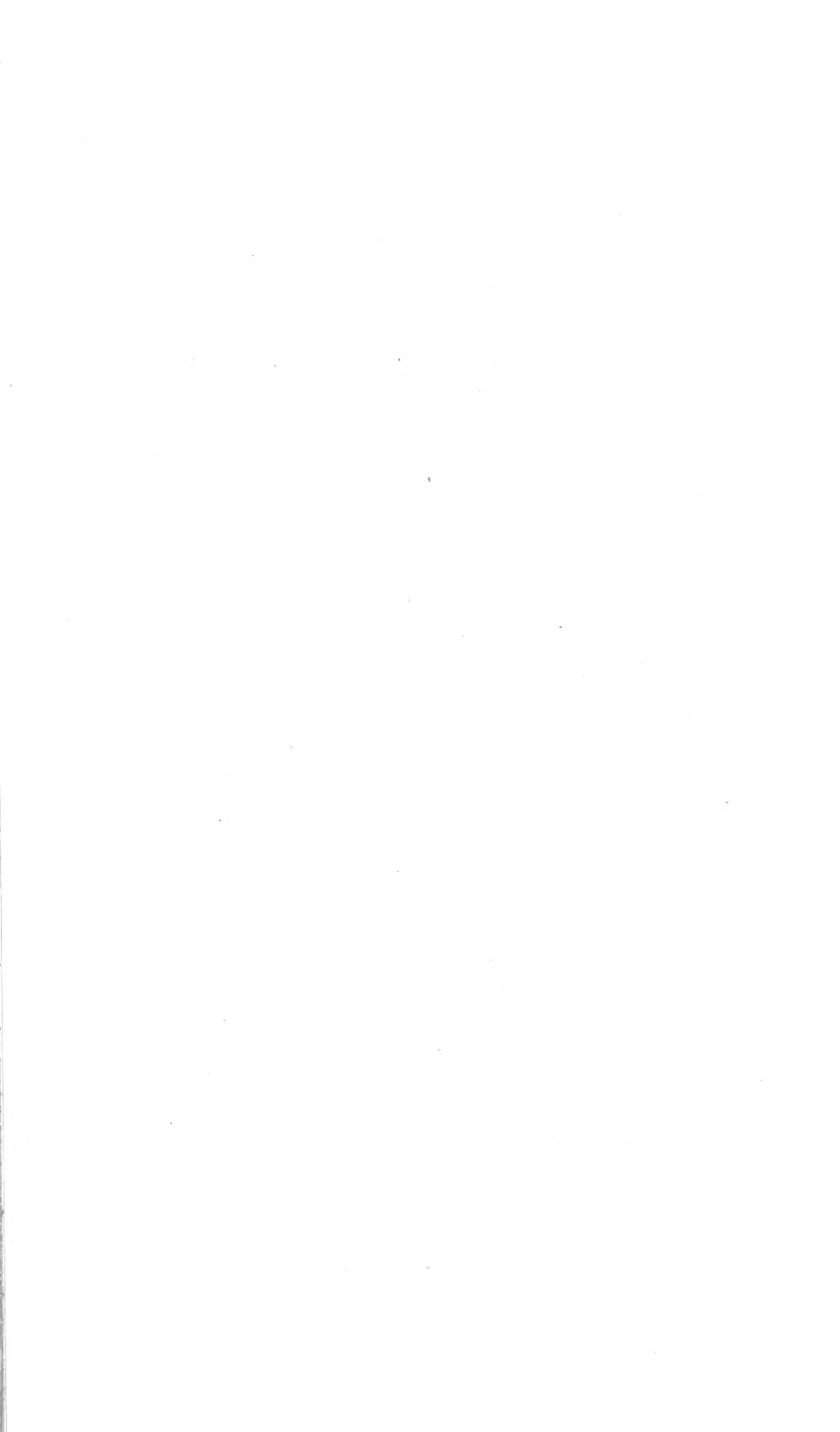
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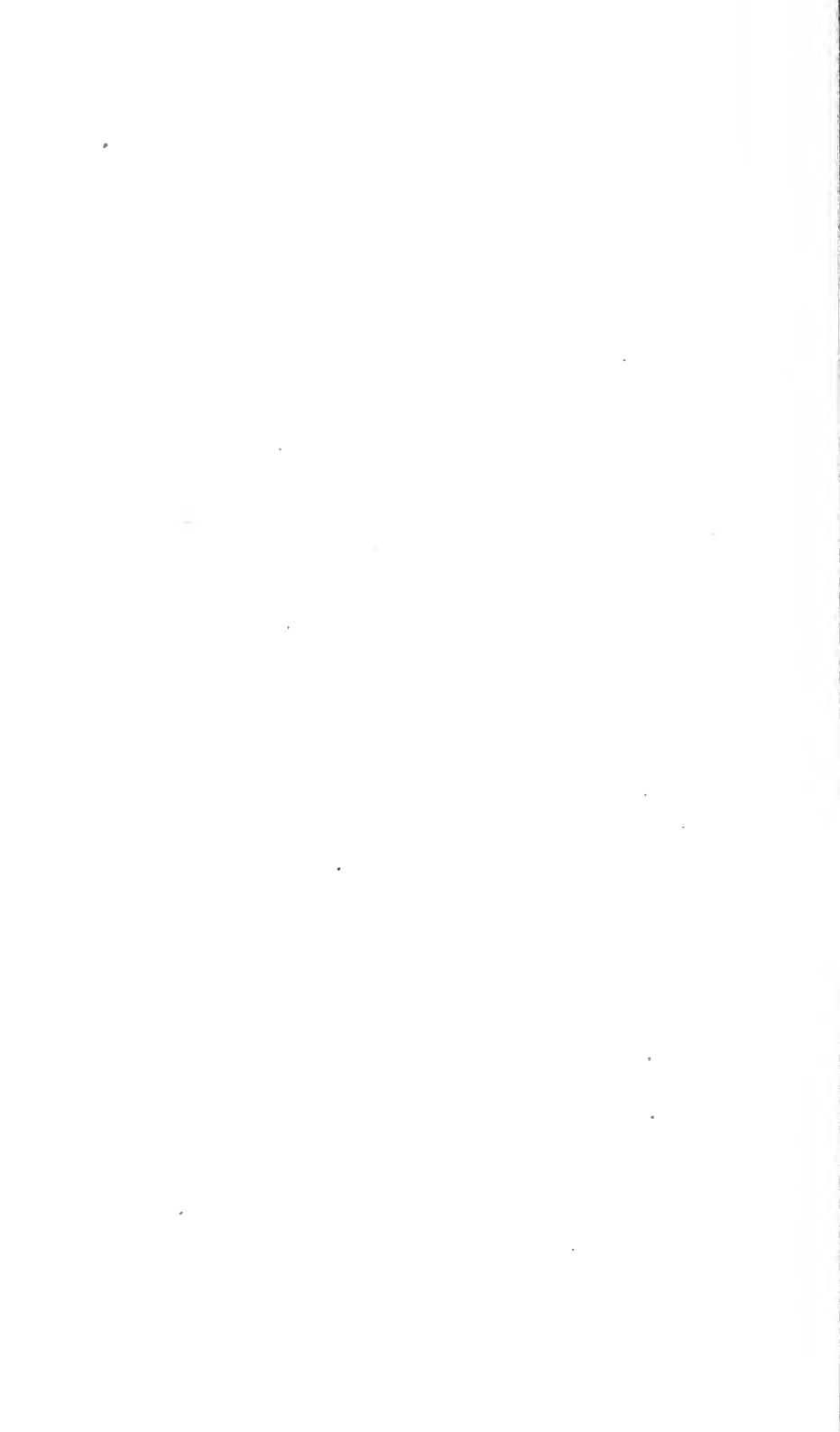






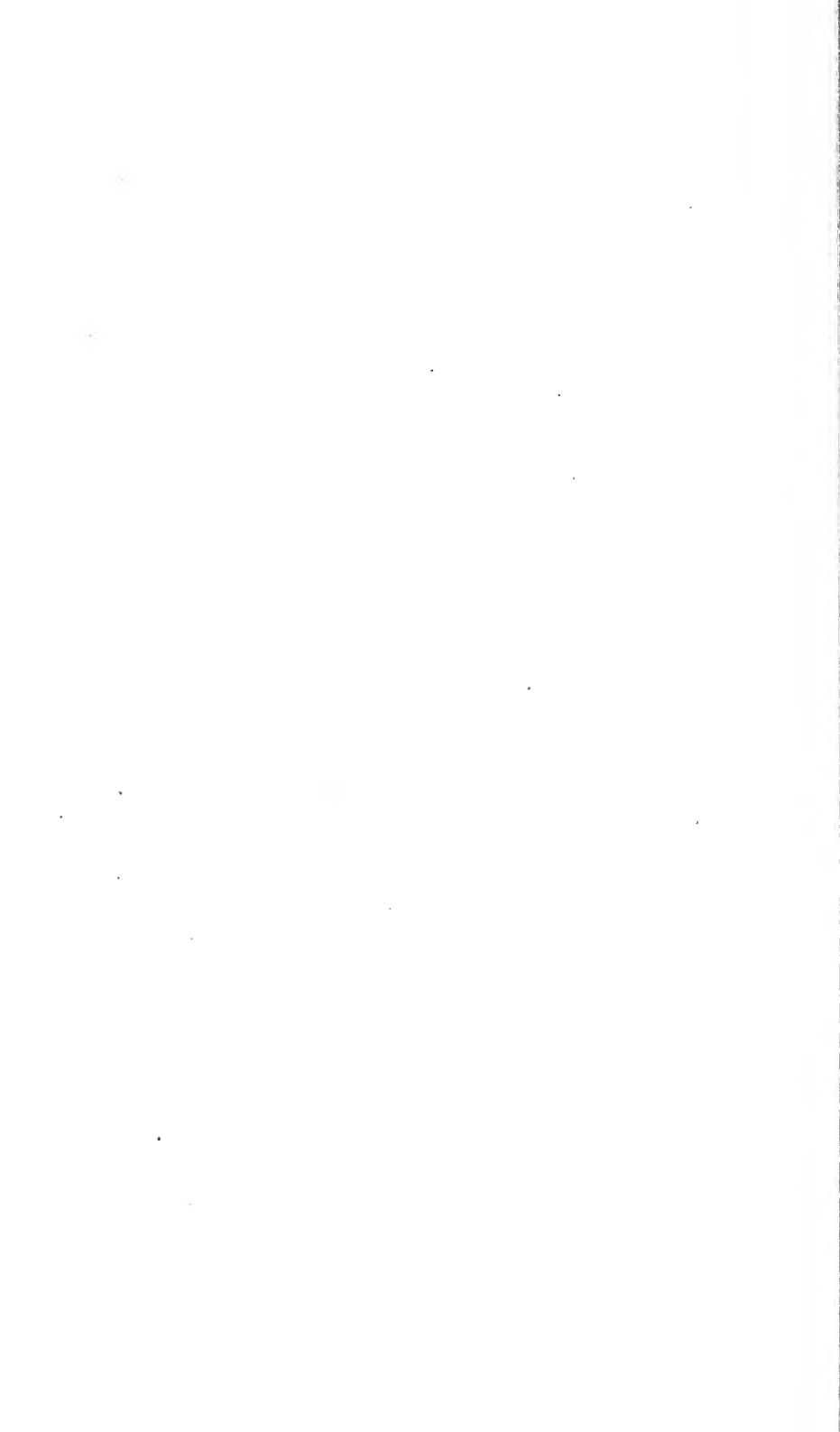


























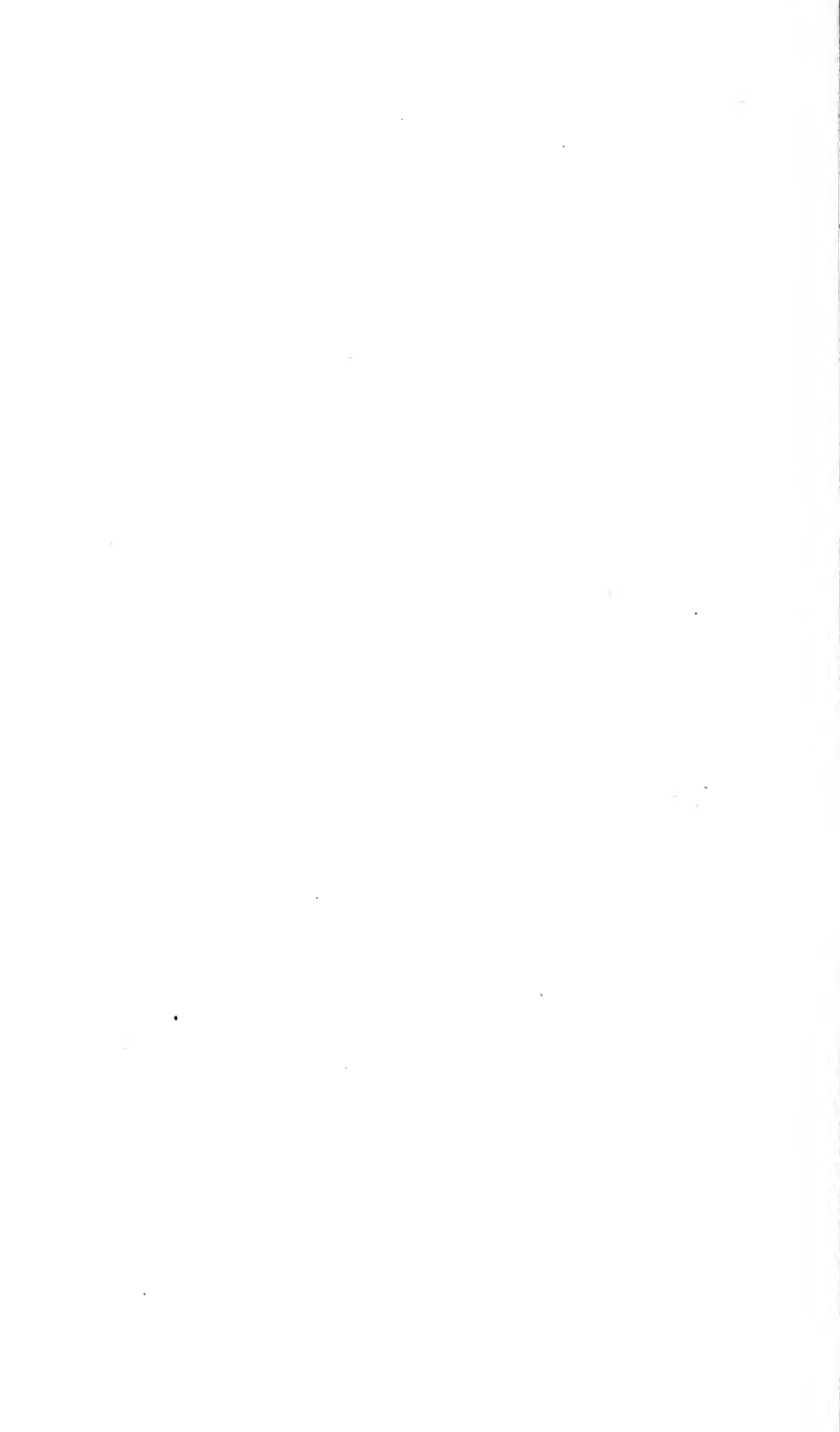




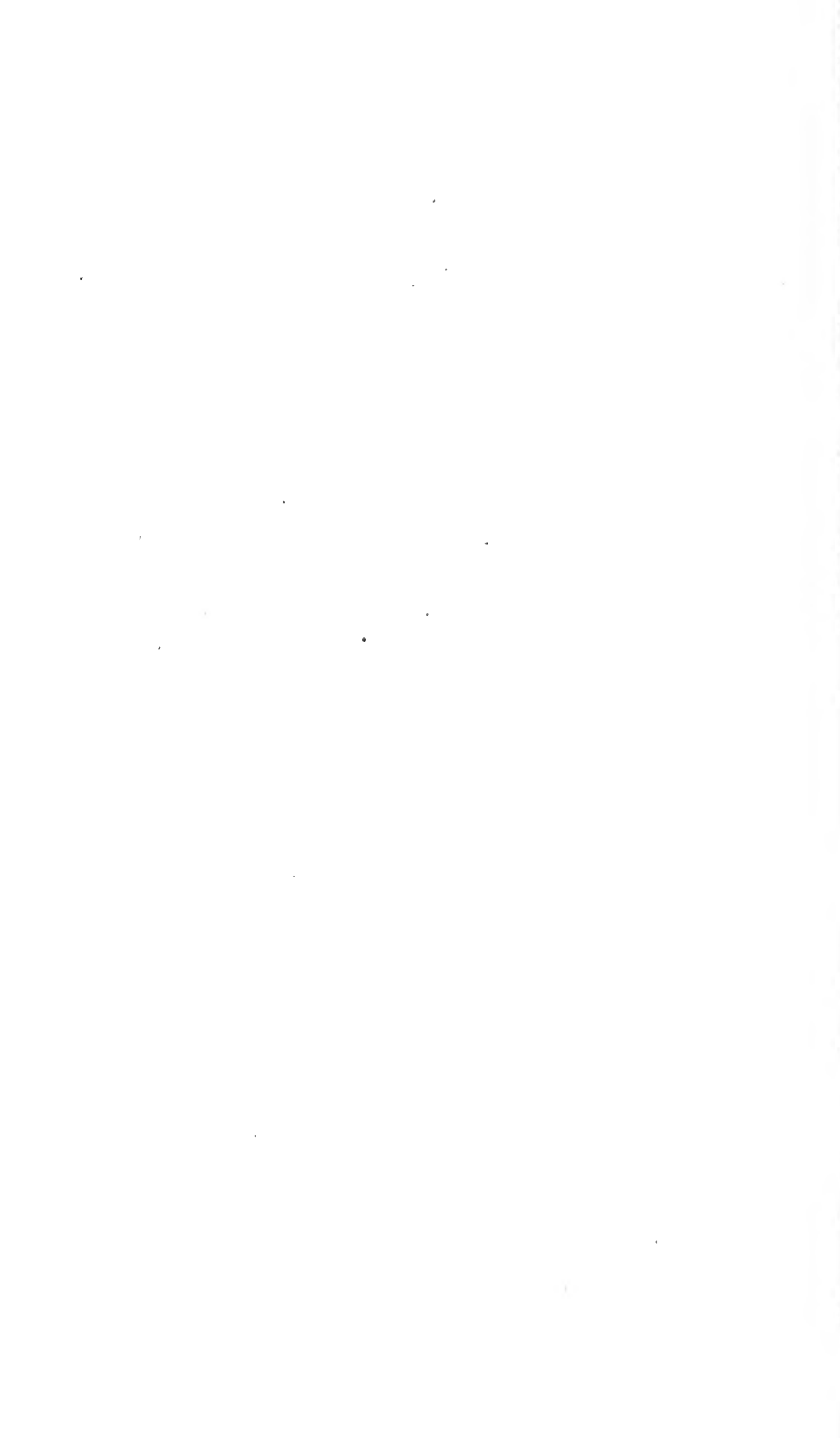














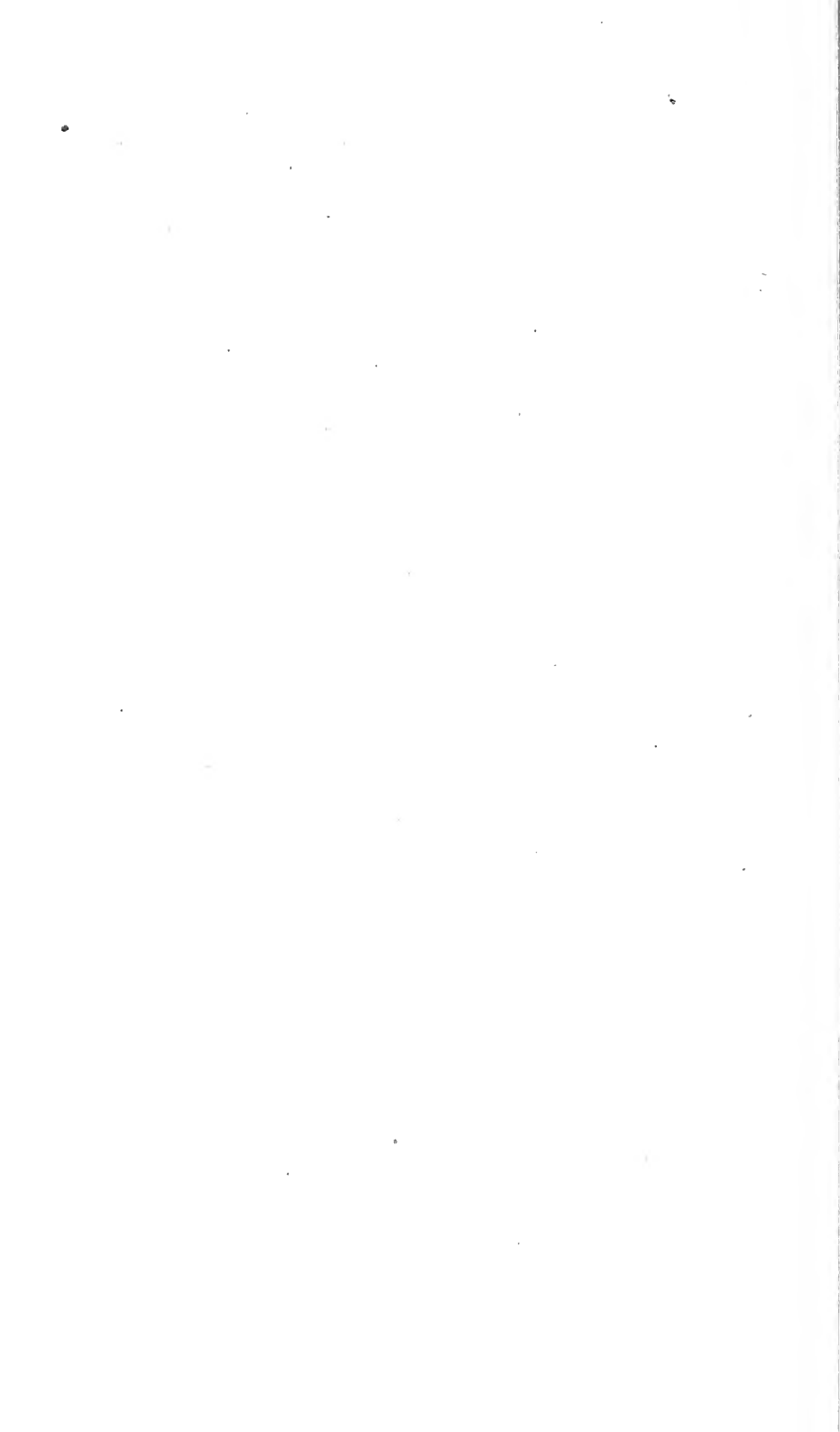




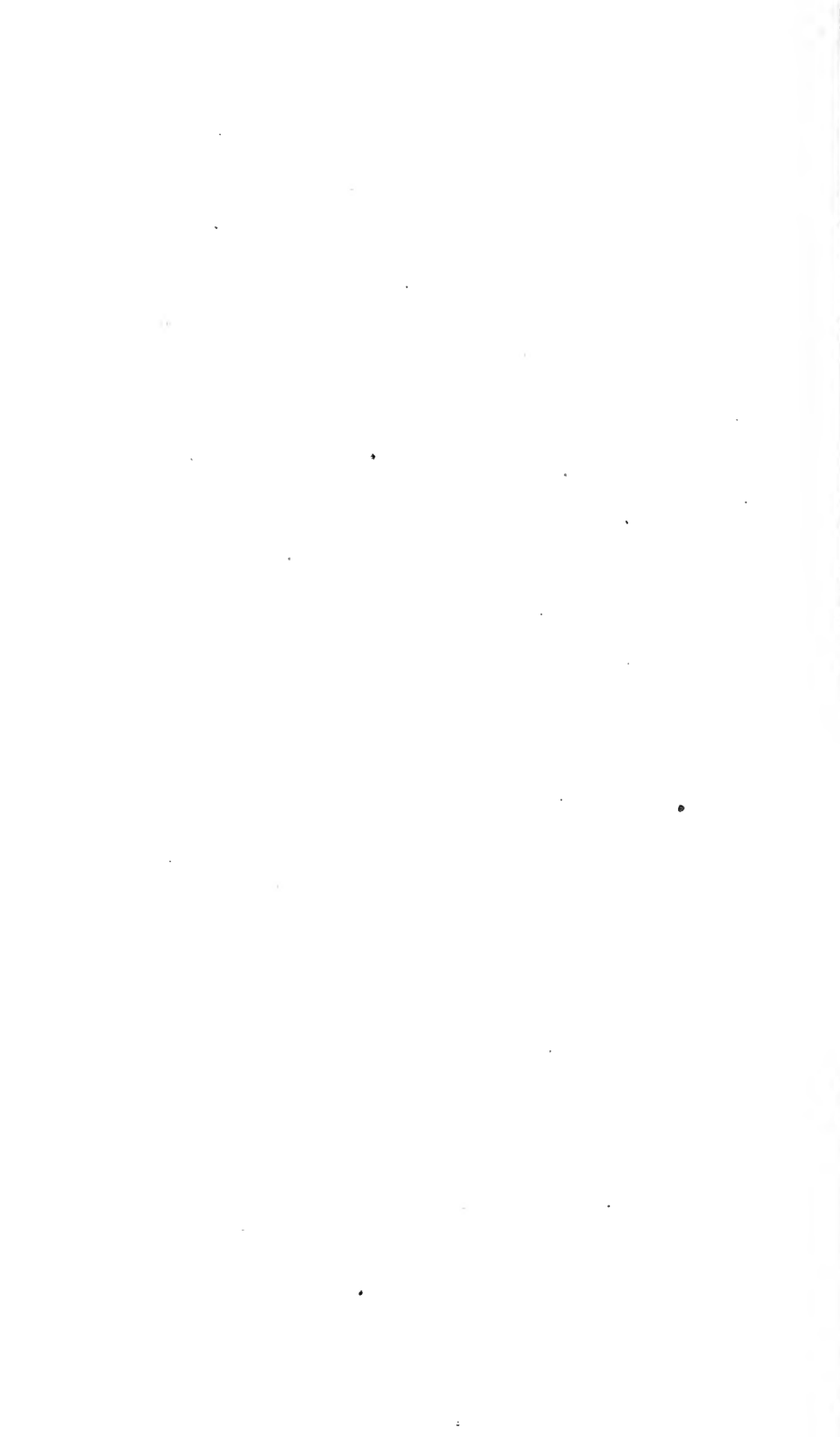
























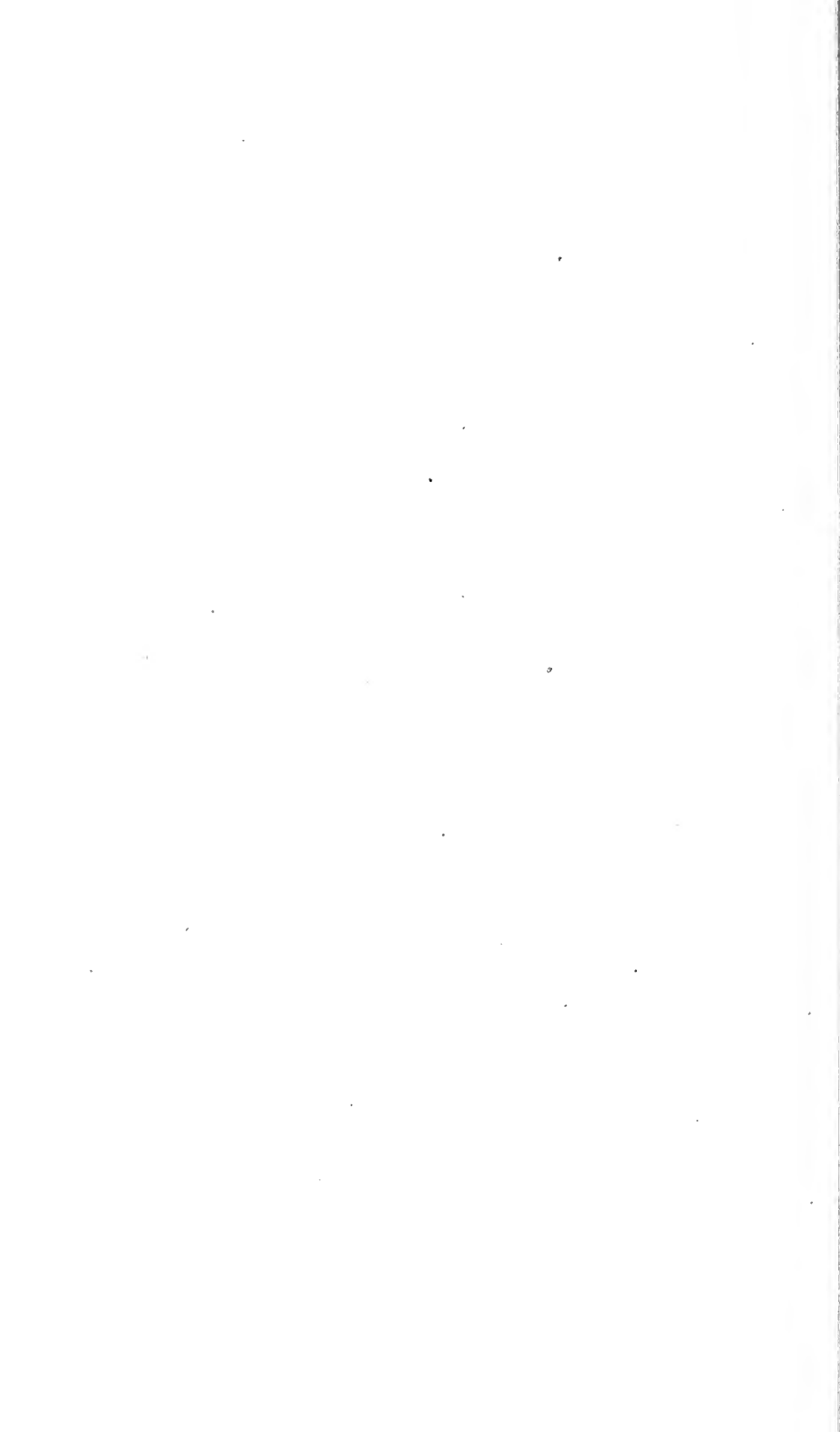








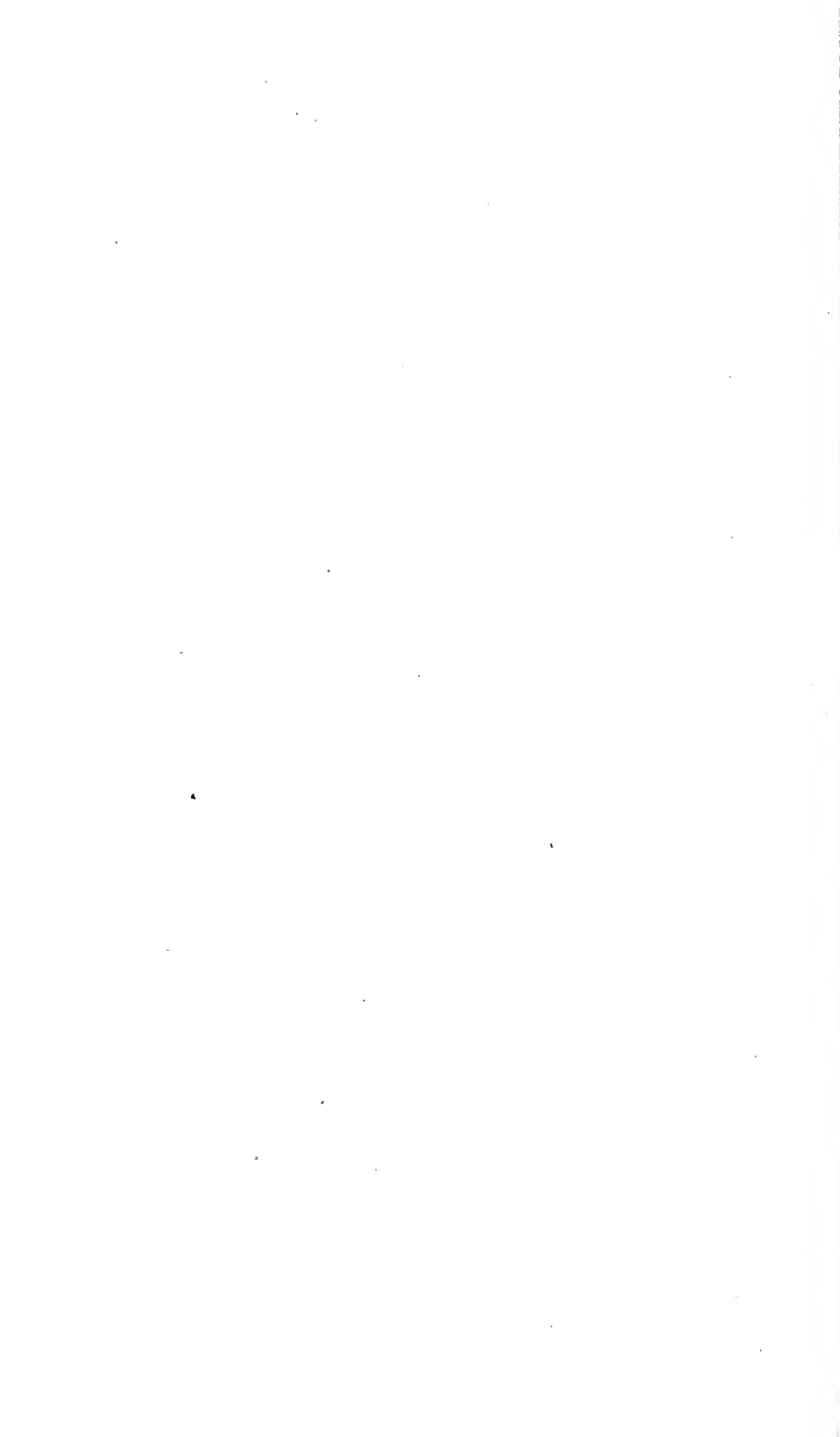










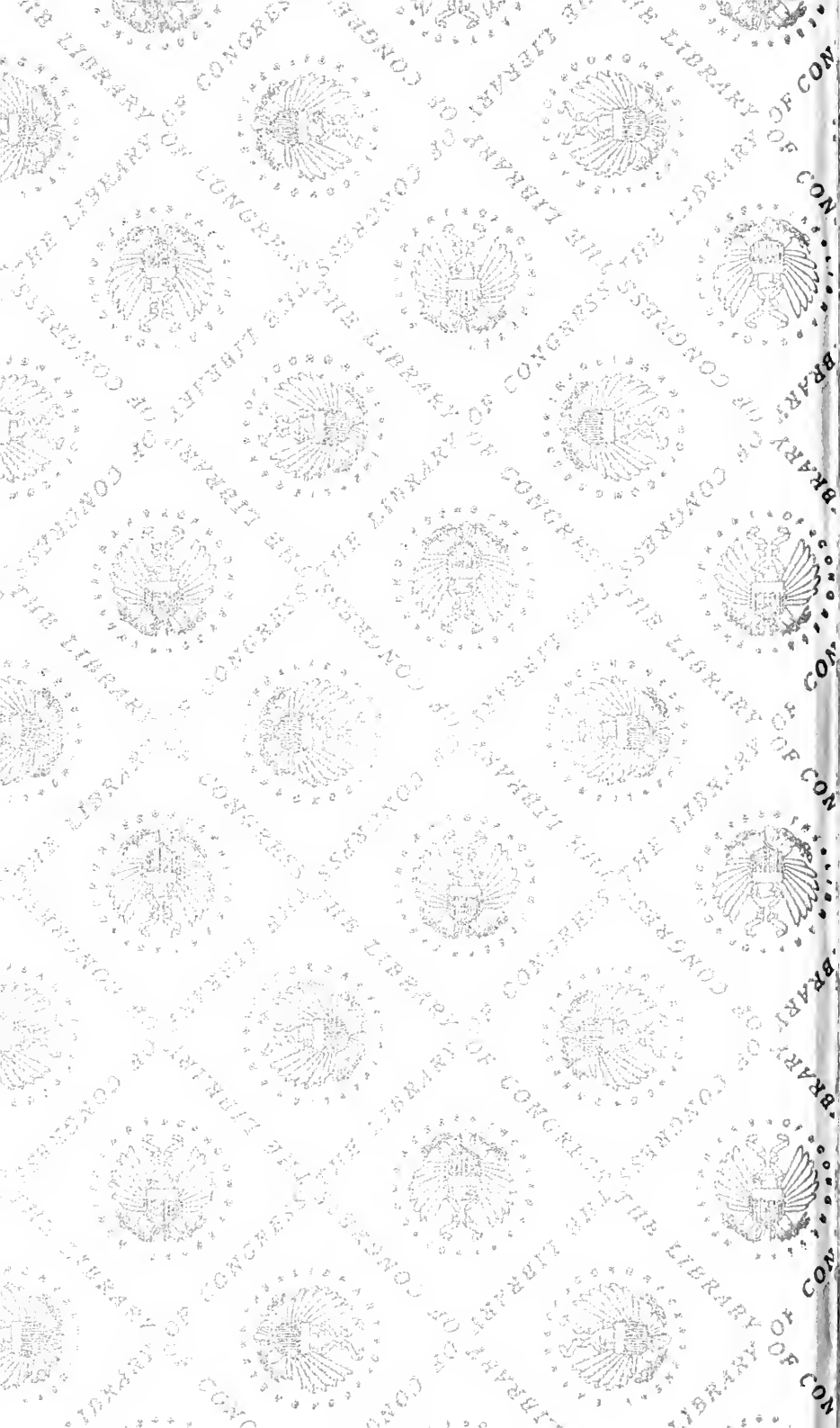












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